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Shaposhnikov Postpones PRC Visit; Silent on Yeltsin

LD2103121993 Moscow Ostankino Television First Channel Network in Russian 1120 GMT 21 Mar 93

[Text] Yevgeniy Shaposhnikov, commander in chief of the joint armed forces of the CIS, today postponed his official visit to China. The press service of the CIS joint armed forces explained that this is due to the situation that has evolved in Russia. Shaposhnikov refused to comment on the Russian president's appeal.

Baltic Leaders Issue Statement on Russian Crisis

OW2203184693 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1811 GMT 22 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Lithuanian President Algirdas Brazauskas, Estonian President Lennart Meri, and Chairman of the Latvian Supreme Council Anatolijs Gorbunovs on Monday [22 March] published a joint statement in which they say that the Russian Federation is being shaken by a serious political crisis, which poses a threat not only for democratic reforms in Russia but for stability and security in Europe and Asia. The document says the Baltic states have always supported the democratic forces in Russia and have been firmly convinced that Russia's historic transition from totalitarianism to democracy would be the best guarantee for good-neighborly relations based on mutual respect, international law, and relevant agreements, and would open new prospects for closer economic, cultural, and political cooperation in Europe and Asia in general. Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania are firmly convinced that the people and leadership of Russia will overcome the present-day crisis by nonviolent means, in the interest of all nationalities populating the country, and for the sake of stability and security of Russia's friends and partners throughout the world, the Baltic leaders say.

Further on Statement

LD2203194193 Vilnius Radio Vilnius Network in Lithuanian 1900 GMT 22 Mar 93

[Text] A statement by state leaders of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania on the situation in Russia has been received. The statement reads, among other things:

The Russian Federation is in a fatal political crisis, which makes an impact not only on the future democratic reforms in Russia, but also on the stability and security in Europe and Asia.

The Baltic states—Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania—have always supported the Russian democratic forces and expressed a firm conviction that the historical turn by Russia from totalitarianism to democracy would be the best guarantee for good neighborly relations based on mutual assistance, international laws, and agreements, which would open new prospects for closer economic, cultural, and political cooperation in Europe and Asia.

The Baltic states—Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania—express a firm hope and belief that Boris Yeltsin, the first democratically elected president of Russia, and the Russian Government will overcome the current crisis in Russia through peaceful means while preserving the interests of nations living in the Federation and for the benefit of the partners and friends of Russia and the stability and security in all the world.

The statement was signed by Lennart Meri, president of the Republic of Estonia; Anatolijs Gorbunovs, chairman of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Latvia; and Algirdas Brazauskas, president of Lithuania.

Nazarbayev Backs Yeltsin's Appeal To Consolidate CIS

OW1803170693 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1625 GMT 18 Mar 93

[From the "Presidential Bulletin" feature prepared by Andrey Pershin, Andrey Petrovskiy, and Vladimir Shishlin and edited by Boris Grishchenko—following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev has expressed his support for Russian President Boris Yeltsin's appeal for measures to consolidate the Commonwealth of Independent States. In a telegram sent to Yeltsin on Thursday [18 March], he proposes that, in order "to maintain and develop comprehensive cooperation, join forces to end the economic crisis, and restore severed economic links," the presidents and prime ministers of those states which have signed the CIS Charter should meet in order to:

1. Consider setting up efficient coordinating structures for the CIS defense union, bodies based on the Collective Security Treaty and operating on the same lines as existing international defense organizations;

2. Formulate principles for forming a viable economic community with a single supranational currency, free trade regulations, and a customs agreement;

3. Consider setting up an interstate economic committee;

4. Formulate principles for relations with states which have not signed the CIS Charter.

Nazarbayev suggests holding such a meeting at the end of March or the beginning of April in Moscow or elsewhere. He proposes that drafting the documents be entrusted to the prime ministers.

IF [INTERFAX] Note: Yeltsin on Tuesday sent out an appeal to the presidents of the CIS member-states, stressing the necessity of forming more efficient coordinating bodies for the Commonwealth.

Suggests CIS Meeting

LD1903223393 Alma-Ata KAZTAG in Russian 1200 GMT 19 Mar 93

[Text] [no dateline as received] Nursultan Nazarbayev sent a response to Boris Yeltsin's 17 March address to the heads of the CIS member-states. It expresses support for the common stand stated by the Russian president and repeatedly advocated by Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation on strengthening cooperation and deepening economic reforms and democratic transformations.

At the same time, bearing in mind the traditional aspiration of people to maintain and develop multilateral cooperation, to escape from economic crisis together, and to restore ties that have been broken, Nursultan Nazarbayev proposes that the heads of state and government of CIS Charter signatories should meet and take specific decisions on a number of issues. These include the creation of bodies that function in a clear-cut manner for a defense alliance along the lines of international military organizations already in existence, in accordance with the Collective Security Treaty, and the development of principles to guarantee a viable economic area with a single supranational currency, with free trade and an agreed customs union. It is also proposed to form an interstate economic committee with all the powers it needs, these being delegated to it by the states that support this decision, and to define the position with regard to the states that have not signed the CIS Charter.

In the opinion of the president of Kazakhstan, it would make sense to hold a meeting to discuss these issues at the end of March or beginning of April in Moscow or any other city, and for heads of government to be charged with preparing drafts of the relevant documents for the summit.

Conference of CIS Parliament Heads Postponed

LD2303144993 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1350 GMT 23 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Aleksey Zavinovskiy]

[Text] St. Petersburg, 23 Mar—In view of the unstable political situation in Russia, a regular sitting of the Permanent Consultative Conference of CIS Heads of Parliaments, originally scheduled for 25 March, has been postponed. Mikhail Krotov, acting secretary of the Interparliamentary Assembly Council, told this to journalists at a news conference today.

In his words, the meeting was going to examine the issues of ratification of treaties and other documents, the social status of servicemen, as well as measures to be taken in preparation for the celebration of the 50th anniversary of victory in the Great Patriotic War.

Mikhail Krotov said that a tour of Commonwealth countries by a Russian delegation headed by Ruslan Khasbulatov was part of preparations for the third sitting of the Interparliamentary Assembly of the CIS member states, which will probably be held at the end of April. At their meetings with representatives of Ukraine, Belarus, and Kazakhstan, they studied new proposals on cooperation and joint work with Russia at the level of deputies' commissions and also defined new approaches toward settling the Karabakh problem.

Baltic Committee To Meet in Tallinn in May

WS2303102393 Tallinn ETA NEWS RELEASE in English 1914 GMT 22 Mar 93

[Text] Tallinn, March 22—The Baltic countries will re-establish a co-operation between the towns in the region, the Baltic committee, at a conference uniting the municipalities of Baltic towns and cities, to be held in Tallinn on May 12-15, the chairman of the Tallinn city council, Sulev Maeltsemees, told ETA.

The committee is targeted to exchange information and draw up joint projects. The Council of Europe has promised the committee financial and expert help.

Adenauer Foundation To Open Mission, Bureaus in Baltics

OW2303120393 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1102 GMT 23 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Konrad Adenauer Foundation has decided to open a mission in Tallinn and bureaus in Riga and Vilnius.

According to the Estonian Prime-Minister Mart Laar, the decision is an indication of Germany's growing interest in Estonia. The idea appeared several months ago, but at first the foundation planned to open the mission in Vilnius. The foundation is planning to hold seminars for government employees from Baltic countries, help organize international conferences and offer training in political sciences.

ITAR-TASS Carries Press Review for 23 Mar

LD2303131793 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0557 GMT 23 Mar 93

["Press Review"—ITAR-TASS headline]

[Text] Moscow March 23 TASS—The aggravated confrontation between the presidential and parliamentary branches of power and the resultant constitutional crisis in Russia are the central topics in today's newspapers.

The press conveys varied evaluations of the positions of the sides, commenting on last week's developments following President Boris Yeltsin's television address to the citizens of Russia about a special rule by decree until the constitutional crisis has been settled.

Newspapers run the text of the president's address, report a Supreme Soviet (parliament) session, which opened on Sunday, and televised remarks on the night of Saturday to Sunday by Russian Vice President Aleksandr Rutskoy, acting parliament chief Yuriy Voronin, Chief Justice of

Russia's Constitutional Court Valeriy Zorkin, and Russia's Procurator-General Valentin Stepankov, and carry comments from the local level and from abroad.

"The president restores law and order and combineds [as received] the law and the right," Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev pointed out in interviews with NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA (independent newspaper) and the INTERFAX news agency.

"As usual, he takes risks himself, not jeopardises anyone else, and, unlike the opposition, does not try to safeguard himself from the people's expression of will. He addresses the people straightforwardly. Attempts to dispute the constitutionality of his decisions discredit anyone and would put any person outside the context of the present-day sense of justice. [quotation marks as received]

"The president has managed to frighten the parliament. Will he manage to elect a new one" is the headline of an article in NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA commenting on the outcome of Sunday's meeting of the parliament. "The result of the deputies' sitting over the weekend can be described as follows: a mountain of radical intentions has brought forth a mouse of more or less cautious decisions," the newspaper maintains.

"The president stakes his all but there are almost no trump cards in his hands, and there are only the vacillating in the stock" is the viewpoint expressed in NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA by Vitaliy Tretyakov in an item on the subject.

Yevgeniy Krasnikov, in an article in the same newspaper, points out that "the president's impeachment is as unrealistic as Yeltsin's triumph". "Rutskoy is being groomed for taking over the presidency," the author maintains.

Predicting a possible development of events, Krasnikov writes: "The most likely consequences of the present crisis will be that a date for a general election (of both a president and people's deputies) would be finally decided upon and in a not too distant future. It is possible that in the nearest future the Civil Union, the Union for the Revival of Russia and other centrist parties and movements will begin consultations about the formation of an electoral bloc".

PRAVDA runs the text of the Russian parliament's address to the parliaments, governments and peoples in the world in view of the president's television address, urging them "to show wisdom and restraint and avoid actions that would put Russian democracy in jeopardy".

"What we expect from a new Russian-U.S. summit is not so much aid as a new phase of cooperation based on the principled accord on partnership," Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev stated in response to questions from KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA readers.

The minister mentioned cooperation on international matters and interaction in the elimination of seats of tension and joint support for human rights among areas of Russian-American partnership.

In the economic field, Kozyrev added, "we need a grace for debt repayment and a possible stabilisation fund to bolster up the rouble so that it would be easier to cope with inflation".

Units of militants from among Tajik refugees are being trained in special camps located in the northern provinces of Afghanistan. This is the opinion, conveyed by NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA, of representatives of the U.N. high commissioner for refugees, who visited the area, and of Russian border guards on the Tajik-Afghan border and Tajikistan leaders.

Referring to the data of the Office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees, the newspaper writes that there are about 80,000 Tajik refugees in northern Afghanistan now. Since practically all of them support the "Islamic-democratic" opposition, the Tajik leadership is seriously concerned over the possibility of a spring offensive by armed groups from Afghanistan.

KRASNAYA ZVEZDA (RED STAR) carries the text of a statement by Russian Defence Minister Pavel Grachev condemning the Georgian side's provocative actions with regard to Russian troops stationed in the area of the Georgian-Abkhazian conflict. "Those actions assume an increasingly dangerous character of late", the statement points out.

"The START-2 and the national interests of Russia" is the headline under which NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA carries a report by the foreign policy association (presided over by Aleksandr Bessmertnykh) on the strategic, economic and political aspects of the treaty which is being discussed at Russian parliament hearings.

"The coup plotters' actions were by no means oriented towards 'supression of the people', clashes or, still less, bloodshed," former Soviet Premier Valentin Pavlov, has stated in a PRAVDA interview. "Our weakness was precisely in this kind of humaneness", he said, maintaining that "we are now witnessing a second edition of the 'August events' only with the opposite sign".

SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA, referring to Liberty Radio, quotes former Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev who regards the Russian president's address as "a political miscalculation".

Christopher Speech on U.S. Aid to Russia Outlined

LD2303150693 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1436 GMT 23 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Aleksandr Korolev]

[Text] Washington March 23 TASS - One of U.S. highest foreign policy priorities is "helping the Russian people build a free society and a market economy," U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher said in Chicago, Illinois, on Monday [22 March] in his remarks to the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations, the mid-America committee and the Executives' Club of Chicago.

"This is the greatest strategic challenge of our time. Bringing Russia—one of history's most powerful countries—into the family of peaceful nations will serve our highest security, moral, and economic interests, he said in a speech outlining the Bill Clinton administration's foreign-policy strategy.

"For America and the world, the stakes are monumental. If we succeed, we will have established the foundation for our lasting security into the next century. But if Russia falls into anarchy or lurches back to despotise, the price that we pay could be frightening. Nothing less is involved that the possibility of a revived nuclear threat; higher U.S. defense budgets; spreading instability; and a devastating set-back for the worldwide democratic movement," the U.S. secretary of state emphasised.

Touching upon a political analysis of the situation in Russia, Mr Christopher said "now it appears that another turning point has been reached in Russia's transition."

"For months, a constitutional crisis between President Yeltsin and the parliament has paralyzed Russian politics. That crisis has come to a head. President Yeltsin has called for a national plebiscite to resolve the constitutional impasse. In so doing, he has again demonstrated his faith in the only force that can guarantee reform's success—the Russian people.

"We welcome President Yeltsin's assurance that civil liberties, including freedom of speech and the press, will be respected," Mr Christopher said. He also said the U.S. welcomes Yeltsin's firm rejection of "imperial and cold war policies."

"The most important point is that russia must remain a democracy moving toward a market economy. That is the only basis for our new U.S.-Russian partnership," he added.

"Over the weekend, President Yeltsin re-committed his government to economic reform. He laid out in clear and strong language the key elements of such a programm continued privatisation of firms, selling land to farmers, stopping inflation, and stabilising the ruble. If this program is implemented, our capacity to help will be greatly enhanced," the U.S. secretary of state said.

"Russia's reformers are now looking to the West for support in this moment of extreme difficulty. The United States has a deep self-interest in responding to this historic challenge. We should extend to the Russian people not a hand of pity, but a hand of partnership. We must lead a long-term Western strategy of engagement for democracy," Mr Christopher pointed out.

"At his meeting with President Yeltsin next month in Vancouver, President Clinton intends to spell out the tangible steps we will take to assist Russian reform. The president is still considering the specific measures he will announce. But our bottom line is that we will be increasing and accelerating our support for Russia's democracy. We cannot do it alone, but we must be prepared to do our part. Here, we favor a meeting later in April where the foreign and finance ministers of the leading industrial democracies will coordinate joint efforts to assist Russia's transformation," Mr Christopher said.

"Clearly, our assistance to Russia must be better targetted and better coordinated than it has been to date. It must focus on areas and constituencies in Russia that can have the greatest impact on reform's long-term success. It cannot simply be limited to public funds. Rather, it must catalyze our private sectors to take a leading role in Russia's transformation through trade, investment, and training. And our help must be felt at the grass roots level, to ease the pain of Russian children, workers, and senior citizens," he added.

The U.S. secretary of state said in conclusion that "we must have no illusions. Even with our help, the road forward will be rocky. Setbacks are inevitable. Russia's transformation will take a great deal of hard work and probably a generation to complete."

International Reaction Positive for Yeltsin

Japanese Foreign Minister Comments

LD2303094893 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 0900 GMT 23 Mar 93

[Text] Japanese Foreign Minister Michio Watanabe has backed the measures for a special period of rule which Russian President Boris Yeltsin announced on Saturday [20 March]. Speaking in a Japanese parliamentary commission today, he declared that Yeltsin's administration has Japan's support. At the same time, the Japanese Government is reported to be considering the question of speeding up holding a ministerial conference of the Big Seven countries on aid to Russia, according to NHK.

Argentine Government Offers Support

LD2303053593 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0506 GMT 23 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Yevgeniy Alekseyev]

[Text] Buenos Aires, 23 Mar—The Argentine Government has highly praised President Yeltsin's activities as head of state and has come forward in support of the process of

democratic transformation in Russia. A statement circulated here on Monday [22 March] by the Argentine Foreign Ministry says that "this process enjoys firm international support and it would be desirable that it not be interrupted." The document points out that "Yeltsin is in charge of a bold and complicated process of transition toward democracy, which is being impeded by the sheer scale of the problems inherited from Soviet militarism."

"In the present situation, the Argentine Government expresses its solidarity with the Russian people and believes the acute political crisis will be overcome within the framework of law and the full observance of human rights," the statement notes.

South African Support Noted

LD2303090593 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0709 GMT 23 Mar 93

[ITAR-TASS correspondent Sergey Kulil]

[Text] Johannesburg, 23 March—The RSA Government supports "the democratic principles upheld by Russian President Boris Yeltsin," says a statement made public in Cape Town on Monday by Foreign Affairs Minister Pik Botha. The head of South Africa's foreign policy department noted that he "is aware of the complexity of tasks facing B. Yeltsin and expresses profound understanding of the crisis situation that has arisen in Russia." The document contains "wishes of success" to the Russian Government. The South African leadership "particularly notes the importance of the issue of land privatization in Russia."

Kozyrev Meets Iran's Ambassador; Visit Discussed

LD2203195493 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1941 GMT 22 Mar 93

[Text] Moscow March 22 TASS—Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev received on Monday [22 March] ambassador of Iran to Russia Nematollah Yazdi. They discussed problems relating to a forthcoming official visit of the Russian foreign minister to Iran. According to the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs Information and Press Department, during the meetings and talks the two countries confirmed their intention to develop multilateral cooperation and ensure security and stability in the region in the interest of Russian and Iranian people.

The two sides expressed hope to consolidate mutual confidence and cooperation between the states in the region in the political, economic and humanitarian spheres on the basis of the respect of interests of all people in the region.

Leaves for U.S., Stops in Ireland

LD2203201293 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 2004 GMT 22 Mar 93

[by ITAR-TASS correspondent Georgiy Shmelev]

[Text] Shannon, Ireland, March 22 TASS—On the way to Washington Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev made a brief stopover in the Irish airport of Shannon where he met with Irish Foreign Minister Dick Spring. This is the first meeting of the foreign ministers of the two countries.

The Russian foreign minister and his Irish counterpart exchanged opinions on the difficult political and economic situation in Russia. They discussed ways of rendering assistance to democratic reforms in Russia, problems relating to bilateral relations, and some international issues.

Previews U.S. Visit

LD2303100993 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0020 GMT 23 Mar 93

[Text] Moscow, 23 Mar (ITAR-TASS)—What we expect from the Russian-American summit is not help but rather a new stage of cooperation based on a principled agreement on partnership. This is what Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev said in response to questions of KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA readers.

The minister said that the Russian-American partnership included cooperation on international matters, elimination of hotbeds of tension, and a united defense of human rights. In the economic sphere, added Andrey Kozyrev, we need a rescheduling of debts and a possible ruble stabilization fund to facilitate the fight against inflation.

Answering questions on the situation in former Yugoslavia, the head of the Russian foreign affairs department voiced the hope that bloodshed could be stopped there. He says that there are already the first signs of it happening. The war in Slovenia has ended, although unfortunately clashes continue in Croatia. Andrey Kozyrev believes that both the Belgrade and the Croatian leadership must accept as an unalterable fact that the former federal state has split apart, and republics have appeared in its place.

In conclusion, the Russian foreign minister expressed the hope that people working in his departmet were only from one party, a "party of professionals".

U.S. Grain Aid Seen as 'Positive Example of Cooperation'

PM2203164593 Moscow ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI in Russian 19 Mar 93 p 1

[Unattributed report: "On U.S. Aid"]

[Text] The agreement on humanitarian aid grain supplies to Russia signed in Washington is a positive example of cooperation from which both sides gain. According to this agreement approximately 520,000 tonnes of wheat and 87,000 tonnes of rice worth $102 million in total will be supplied to Russia as humanitarian aid in April 1993. The purchase and delivery of the freight to the Russian border will be carried out by the U.S. Government.

At the Russian side's request the question of additional humanitarian aid from the United States worth approximately $100 million for the supply of 600,000 tonnes of grain in April and May is being examined at present.

'Russia-USA' Fund Begins Conference in Moscow

LD2203214093 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1125 GMT 22 Mar 93

[Report by ITAR-TASS correspondent]

[Text] Moscow, 22 Mar—Relations between the authorities and the press, the economic problems of an independent press, and the legal framework of its activities—such are the main themes of an international conference which opened today at ITAR-TASS. It was organized by the international public fund "Russia-USA," the fund for development of economic reform, the international center for public administration (USA), and Colorado State University.

In recent days, the problems discussed at this meeting have acquired special urgency, underlined Professor Konstantin Zatulin, leader of the economic development fund. He explained that Russian business circles have stepped up their political activities and wish to occupy their place in the political arena. The ideas of democracy and market in Russia go hand in hand. In many ways, freedom of speech today becomes a guarantee of their development.

In Zatulin's opinion, the experience of the press in the United States, which provides examples of civilized democracy to the entire world, today acquires great importance.

The task of the democratic press in Russia now is to support private ownership, private farming, and new forms of economic activities, academician Aleksandr Yakovlev, president of the fund "Russia-USA," said in his speech. The "Russia-USA" fund was set up in January of this year at the initiative of ITAR-TASS, the international association of leaders of enterprises, and editors in chief of leading Russian mass media.

Publishers and mass media editors from the United States and Russia and the leaders of the press services of leading ministries and departments are taking part in the conference, which will last until 25 March.

Marshall Kaplan, dean of the department of social sciences at Colorado State University, who chaired today's session, outlined the range of issues to be discussed, which was mentioned already during the first speeches. These are the problems of the trust of authority structures in the press, the depth of realization by Russian journalists of the real essence of the political struggle under way in the country, and the insufficiency of journalists' competence on the specialized themes they have to cover.

Air Force Official on Georgian Forces Shooting Down Su-27

LD1903151493 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1442 GMT 19 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Roman Zadunayskiy]

[Text] Moscow, 19 Mar—The Su-27 interceptor fighter of the Russian Air Force, which was shot down today in the Sukhumi area by Georgian air defense, was carrying out a task of the Russian command and was not taking part in the conflict on the Abkhazian side. This was stated by Colonel of Aviation Gennadiy Lisenkov, chief of the Russian Air Force press center, in a conversation with an ITAR-TASS correspondent.

According to Gennadiy Lisenkov, the timetable of this tragic flight was as follows: At 0300 on 19 March the Russian Air Force flight control received radio intercept information that Georgian aircraft were preparing to inflict a strike on Russian military facilities deployed in this region, including the 101st Air Assault Battalion.

At 0330 two Georgian Air Force combat aircraft appeared over the Russian military facilities, and two Su-27 interceptor fighters of the Russian Air Force took off. For half an hour the Russian pilots carried out a continuous patrol in the skies, preventing the Georgian pilots from inflicting a missile bomb strike.

At 0427 the flight control post suddenly lost contact with one of the Su-27's. According to ground reconnaissance information, the Georgian air defense forces fired a missile at it, the aircraft caught fire and started breaking up in the air, and splinters of the plating started to break off.

The chief of the Russian Air Force press center has confirmed that the Su-27 was piloted by Major of Aviation Vatslav Shipko, born in 1958, who was assigned to a Russian military unit stationed in Abkhazia. He stressed that, contrary to the statement made by the Georgian side, the downed Su-27 could not have taken part in the bombing of Sukhumi since the fighter interceptor was equipped only with "air-to-air" missiles designed exclusively for hitting airborne targets; there were no bombs onboard.

This afternoon two officers of the Russian troops left for the Georgian side by helicopter to investigate the incident. They are to clarify the fate of the pilot, who ejected and died, according to preliminary and unverified information.

The chief command of the Russian Air Force is monitoring the investigation of the incident.

Germany Warns Russia

AU2003142993 Tbilisi Radio Tbilisi Network in Georgian 0900 GMT 20 Mar 93

[Text] The German Government has addressed a statement to the Russian Government concerning the events in Abkhazia.

In particular, the statement says that, in the event that Russia continues military actions against the Republic of Georgia, the German Government will be forced to review its former relations with Russia.

Editorial Views Involvement in Abkhazia

PM2203151993 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 20 Mar 93 First Edition p 8

["Editorial Viewpoint": "Questions Raised by the War Require Precise Answers"]

[Text] With increasing frequency we are encountering news in reports from the areas of fighting in Abkhazia which is not easy to evaluate. According to information relayed by Georgian sources—not just reports from agencies and correspondents, but statements by state officials as well, including state leader Eduard Shevardnadze—blatant references are being made to the involvement in combat operations on the Sukhumi front of a "third party," namely Russia. The involvement of its mercenaries, and even of its regular military.

Furthermore, Georgian leaders assert that Russian Su-25 ground-attack aircraft are taking part in bombing of Sukhumi's residential areas, flying in from Gudauta airfield, which is controlled by the Russian Army. They suggest that the Russian military are to blame for the dozens of casualties from the bombings and for the deaths of peaceful inhabitants.

At the same time the Abkhaz Government in Gudauta, claims that Abkhaz Republic Armed Forces combat aviation was used during the attack on Sukhumi by the Abkhaz Army. The Russian military, whose channel of communication with the public for some reason continues to be the Defense Ministry Press Center alone, constantly stress their neutrality in the Abkhaz-Georgian conflict: They have repeatedly stated that their aircraft are not participating in the bombing of the city. They do not know whose Su-25 aircraft are attacking the residential areas.

This is a blatant lie, for many reasons. First, there is only one airfield in Abkhazia from which the aircraft can take off—Gudauta, which is controlled by the Russian military—and it is to that airfield that they return. Not to know where the ground-attack aircraft are going and why would be to acknowledge a lack of professionalism on their part, which is doubtful, or to knowingly deceive the public, which is worse.

Second, if the aircraft are taking off from other airfields—from Groznyy, for instance—then how is it that the Russian Army's radars do not pick them up? How can the celebrated air defense system of the North Caucasus miss such an enormous target as the bombs from a ground-attack aircraft, which weigh half a tonne, day in, day out? What if, suddenly, an aircraft starts flying not toward Sukhumi but in the direction of Sochi or Novorossiysk? And where do these aircraft refuel? Where are they serviced? Whose pilots are sitting in the bombers' cockpits?

In short, who is waging the war, to what ends, and by whose hands?

Why do the Russian Supreme Soviet, its Committee for Defense and Security Questions, and other authoritative organs remain silent? Can it really be that the president, his closest entourage, and the Russian state structures do not know whether Russia is participating in the Abkhazia war or not?

Charges that Russia is secretly supporting one of the sides in this armed and bloody conflict, and the deathly silence maintained by its competent and responsible state officials on this score, constitute too serious a political circumstance to be ignored. The delay in providing honest answers to the direct questions raised by the war could speak all too loudly, both as far as Russia is concerned in the international arena and with respect to the future of the Russian-speaking population in Georgia itself.

Economics Minister Begins Visit to Germany 19 Mar

OW1903195993 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1918 GMT 19 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The coordination of Germany's credits to Russia is the main issue on the agenda of the brief working visit by Russia's Economics Minister Andrey Nechayev to Germany which began on Friday. Nechayev is going to have talks with Chancellor Helmut Kohl and Economics Minister Gunter Reksrodt. Nechayev will deliver to Chancellor Kohl a message from the Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin, which brings up a wide range of issues on bilateral cooperation. Economics Minister Nechayev is planning to discuss investment into various branches of the Russian economy with Germany's leading industrialists and businessmen.

An economics ministry press secretary has said that Nechayev is going to coordinate with German partners the supplies on favorable terms of products and materials necessary to keep Russia's industry going throughout the transitional period. In addition, he is going to ask Germany for the supplies of baby foods, including milk.

FRG Government Spokesman Interviewed

PM2203143193 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 12 Mar 93 p 3

[Interview with Norbert Schaefer, official spokesman for the FRG Government, by correspondent Vadim Markushin; place and date not given: "Without Nationalist Ambitions"]

[Text] [Markushin] Mr. Schaefer, united Germany is gaining a new role in the international arena. There is a shift of emphasis in its foreign policy. How do you see its relations with Russia evolving?

[Schaefer] Developing German-Russian relations is a cornerstone of united Germany's foreign policy. The extra

responsibility which our country has gained since unification is being realized within the EC framework. We decisively reject "nationalist ambitions." This policy has been officially proclaimed and is implemented in practice. Our EC partners also regard the situation in precisely this way.

I see bilateral relations with Russia as a good opportunity which could be realized to the benefit of our peoples and peace in Europe. The unification of Germany brought the era of confrontation to an end. Germany and Russia can now close this chapter in history, which is full of suffering. They can embark on a new relationship, basing it on the traditions of joint activity which have developed over the centuries. This joint movement has begun and progress has been achieved which H. Kohl's government will do its utmost to stimulate further. In this it relies on the will of the German people, 80 percent of whom, according to recent research, are sympathetic to the Russian people.

[Markushin] Reunification with the eastern lands has led to the formation of a certain vacuum in place of the traditionally broad cooperation between Moscow and Berlin. Filling this vacuum is a historical imperative. Do you support this view?

[Schaefer] You are referring to the vacuum which has arisen in economic ties since the breakup of the USSR and in connection with the reorganization of the economic systems in Russia and the other former CEMA states. On our side, trade partners in eastern Germany have suffered most from the reduction in commodity circulation resulting from this process. Enormous problems have arisen—both for the development of the market in the FRG and for the state budget. Both sides are now working hard to fill this vacuum, as you call it, and are striving to lay the foundations for durable, long-term ties. Chancellor H. Kohl and President B. Yeltsin made known their determination to do this in a joint statement adopted in Moscow 16 December 1992. I will not dwell on the details of the agreements signed. I will stress, however, that it takes time to implement major initiatives.

On a general political level, I see no vacuum in German-Russian relations. They have solid foundations in the form of the joint statement signed during President Yeltsin's visit to Germany in November 1991. It encompasses the political, economic, scientific, and cultural spheres. The main tenor of this statement is friendship, good-neighborliness, and cooperation. I personally am optimistic in this respect, because virtually every day I encounter instances of the list of joint measures being put into practice.

[Markushin] For many years the German-Soviet Friendship Society looked after our spiritual contact. Now it has been abolished. They say it personified the bureaucratic approach to international cooperation. But what has taken its place?

[Schaefer] Almost ideal opportunities have arisen in the sphere of spiritual mutual understanding, which we could not even have dreamed of a few years ago. The Working Association of German Societies for Relations With the East, which is based in Dortmund and unites 17 regional organizations with a total of some 6 million members, may be seen as the successor to the disbanded German-Soviet Friendship Society. These people are independent as far as philosophy and party affiliation are concerned. Their common objective is to develop human contacts between the FRG and the former Soviet Union.

Moreover, German-Russian societies and organizations with roughly the same aims are also being formed. The German-Russian Forum was founded in Bonn recently, for example, and several high-ranking representatives of political, economic, and cultural circles are involved in its activity. In fact, the forum is headed by Dr. Andreas Meyer-Landrut, state secretary, head of the federal president's department, and former FRG ambassador to Moscow.

There is enormous interest in Germany in developing such contacts. I would like to give you an example. In the winter of 1991-1992, nongovernment organizations sent approximately 28,000 tonnes of humanitarian aid worth 206 million marks to 130 cities in the CIS. I stress—this was done not at the state's expense, but spontaneously, by citizens themselves. It was organized by various charitable societies and religious, municipal, and other organizations.

[Markushin] Russia's military presence in the FRG will end in 18 months. It has been a real basis for permanent, broad human ties—of this you are well aware. Another vacuum, is that not so?

[Schaefer] I am quite sure the comprehensive contacts and extensive exchange of information which have taken place in the last two years will continue after the Western Group of Forces has been withdrawn. On their return home the officers and soldiers will help to strengthen friendship between our countries.

I would like to point out that recently there has been much more active cooperation between the FRG mass media and the Western Group of Forces. Seminars and information-gathering trips by journalists across Germany are helping to broaden and deepen our knowledge of one another.

Again, returning to your question of spiritual contact, I can say that it has also embraced the purely military sphere. Thanks to joint information-gathering measures, the Bundeswehr and the Western Group of Forces have achieved a great deal in the last two years. This good beginning should be built on even after the Russian troops have left. In this respect, we must work on the basis that many false stereotypes and distorted pictures appeared in both countries during the decades of confrontation, and even now these make the road to understanding difficult. These cliches can be changed only by exchanging objective, unadorned information.

Naturally, this will take time. We will not be immediately successful everywhere. Although amazing things are happening before our very eyes: German and Russian intelligence services are working together to combat the international drugs trade, organized crime, and terrorism.

[Markushin] Unfortunately, it must be said that the withdrawal of the Western Group of Forces is accompanied by unlawful actions against the Russian military. What, in your view, will be the trend in this respect?

[Schaefer] This is certainly true. There is a certain amount of hostility toward foreigners among a section of the east German population. But police statistics show that these are isolated incidents. They can only be regretted.

I should point out—not as justification, but so that you have the full picture—that servicemen from the Western Group of Forces also contribute to the crime situation in eastern Germany. This is the cost of coexistence. I should also point out that German and Russian law enforcement bodies work together in every case.

In conclusion, I would like to say that the withdrawal of more than half a million people, some 100,000 units of weaponry, and 2.6 million tonnes of freight in such a short space of time is a very complex task. The fact that all this has so far been done systematically and efficiently impresses the Germans.

DPRK Envoy to Russia Comments on NPT Withdrawal

SK2203142593 Moscow Radio Moscow in Korean 1200 GMT 20 Mar 93

[From "Today's World" program]

[Text] We have reported that the DPRK declared its withdrawal from the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty [NPT]. DPRK Ambassador Son Song-pil, meeting with reporters from the Russian mass media and with Russian intellectuals, spoke about this and about the situation on the Korean peninsula. Station reporter Vasin Kabayev, who attended the press conference, writes:

The Korean ambassador to Russia talked about the situation on the Korean peninsula. He said:

[Begin Son Song-pil recording] Briefly, a grave situation prevails in our country, in which a war could break out at any time. The United States and its followers are totally responsible for this situation. The United States and the South Korean authorities began the Team Spirit-93 joint military exercise, infringing upon our repeated demand and the aspirations of the world's peace-loving people. The United States' purpose in conducting the Team Spirit military exercise against us is to threaten us militarily and to obliterate our country's socialist system.

The United States instigated some of its followers in the International Atomic Energy Agency [IAEA] Secretariat to adopt an unjust decision on special inspection against us. The U.S. scheme is evident. In other words, the United States thought that if special inspections of the two sites [taesang] were proposed, it was clear that we would not accept it. If we did not accept it, the United States would have the matter referred to the UN Security Council so as to take collective sanctions against us. We cannot accept this unjust resolution. Therefore, we gave advance warning that if the unjust resolution on special inspections was adopted and was forced upon us, we would take a decisive countermeasure.

This just step that we took is now a subject of heated discussion around the world. The United States and other Western countries—followers of the United States—say that we should reconsider our decision to withdraw. We have nothing to reconsider. [end recording]

Then our station reporter interviewed the Korean ambassador.

[Begin recording] [Vasin Kabayev] The IAEA Secretariat met in Vienna on 18 March. They decided not to take any steps against your country until the end of March and gave Korea an opportunity to make a prudent judgment. Ambassador, what is your view of this?

[Son Song-pil] They do not need to ask us to reconsider nor give us time to do it. The IAEA Secretariat should reconsider its act of siding with the antirepublic maneuvers and following the United States instead of taking an independent and fair position.

[Kabayev] Nikolay Solovyev, director of Asia-Pacific regional affairs at the Russian Foreign Ministry, in an interview with the Japanese YOMIURI SHIMBUN, said that the DPRK, the ROK, the United States, and Japan should hold special four-way talks to explore ways out of this crisis. What is your opinion about this proposal?

[Son Song-pil] This is a matter between us and the United States. The United States is opposing us and is attempting to obliterate the system of our republic by means of force [himui pangbop], conducting the Team Spirit joint military exercise and putting pressure on us through the IAEA. Therefore, as far as this matter is concerned, intervention by other countries is useless [kurogi ttaemune imunjenun tarun naraga kkioduroya piryo opssumnida]. [end recording]

Military-Industrial Complex 'Activity' in India

PM2203144793 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 18 Mar 93 First Edition p 3

[Nikolay Paklin report: "Moscow Offers Delhi New Combat Aircraft"]

[Text] After something of a lull, enterprises of the Russian military-industrial complex are switching to resolute activity on the Indian arms market and do not intend to give in to their Western competitors "without a fight."

On at least three occasions recently Indian newspapers have reported that India and Britain will sign a contract to purchase the British Hawk light training aircraft for the Indian Air Force. On every occasion the hearts of French arms dealers stopped momentarily: After all, France is

attempting to sell India its own Alpha training aircraft, and the contract is a big one, so to speak, worth approximately $2 billion.

However, up to now India has not signed a contract either with Britain or with France. The reasons for this can only be speculated. The other day Indian newspapers reported that the Indian Government is seriously examining Russia's proposal to supply it with the S-54 training aircraft. How true is this information?

"We did indeed make such a proposal," a Russian expert involved in selling military hardware in Delhi confirmed to your correspondent. "The aircraft is first class in all respects, and what is most important, it will cost India considerably less than the similar versions from Britain and France. But the fact is that because of a lack of funds, the S-54 has not been put into series production at the present time. We will start producing this aircraft in 1994, and it has not been ruled out that we will produce it jointly with India, which is keen to familiarize itself with the latest Russian technology in the sphere of aircraft construction."

The S-54 has one other advantage. It can easily be turned from a training aircraft into a combat aircraft. Specialists believe that the S-54 is fully capable of replacing the MiG-21, which has hitherto formed part of the arsenal of a number of foreign armies. And this opens wide export possibilities.

Russia has also made India another tempting offer: To sell it a complete innovation, namely the MiG-31. This is why a Russian delegation has arrived in Delhi to discuss the possibility of concluding this deal.

Yerevan Firm Prints IZVESTIYA From Facsimile

PM2203161593 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 18 Mar 93 First Edition p 5

[Sergey Bamblumyan report: "IZVESTIYA Wholesale and Retail"]

[Text] Yerevan—Customs barriers, the nonconvertibility of national currency, and transport bottlenecks... These and plenty more obstacles have been placed in IZVESTIYA's path as it travels from Moscow to its readers in the CIS republics. It is becoming increasingly difficult to deliver the newspaper by traditional means. However, it is true that considerable experience of an untraditional method of distributing IZVESTIYA already exists—in Armenia.

Last September a local agency acquired the right to print and distribute IZVESTIYA by concluding an appropriate contract with the publishing house in Moscow. Since then the agency has been receiving the newspaper pages by facsimile transmission [fototelegraf] and itself organizing the print run, delivery to subscribers, and retail sales.

How does this benefit the agency?

"Despite considerable outlay, we are making a profit which could be multiplied in time," Ruben Miroyan, director of the independent agency, believes. "We pay the expenditure incurred by the Moscow publishing house in transmitting the pages via communications channels at a price of 1,300 rubles [R] per page, plus R5,000 per issue regardless of the distributed print run. We use our own money to obtain paper, pay the printing expenses, lease the premises, and so forth. Consequently 20 issues a month cost us a little over R1 million."

This is a considerable sum, of course, but by printing just 5,000 copies per day and selling them at R15 per issue, the agency makes over R150,000 profit every month. This figure could probably look far more impressive as soon as R. Miroyan manages to untie a knot that has been tied through no fault of his own.

The fact is that 1,200 subscribers were promised the newspaper for R5. Following the manifold increase in the price of paper and other services, R. Miroyan thought it impossible to tax the newspaper's readers with a surcharge, but in order to somehow close the emerging financial breach he was forced to increase the retail price. And he will probably stand to gain by this, since in the next six months it is hoped to double or even triple the number of subscribers.

For the time being, however, satisfied with two rubles earned for each issue sold, the agency is staying on an even keel, although, needless to say, it does also earn income by printing and distributing local newspapers.

However, as far as IZVESTIYA is concerned, R. Miroyan claims, there is every reason to increase its print run, since from the very beginning right up to the present time no copies have ever been returned. IZVESTIYA is currently sold at all kiosks in Yerevan and sells out within 20 minutes. Nevertheless, as a businessman, the agency's director does not intend to force the pace of events and is keeping sensible margins in mind. He does not want to work to his own detriment, but at the same time he is taking it on himself to prove that business and morality are certainly not mutually exclusive. When IZVESTIYA was not printed in Armenia for a whole month owing to an electricity shortage, R. Miroyan pledged to deliver the following month's IZVESTIYA free of charge. "People must have confidence in us, and they must not lose out as a result of circumstances, even if we have no control over them," the agency's director believes. He is also convinced that, irrespective of financial and technical problems and the political situation, people should have the opportunity to obtain and read whichever newspaper they choose.

'Ice Has Broken' in Lithuanian Foreign Policy

PM2203152793 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 18 Mar 93 p 15

[Yu. Stroganov report: "The Ice Begins To Break"]

[Text] Vilnius—Two events in recent days in Lithuania are striking evidence of changes for the better in the foreign policy of this Baltic state. These were the meeting between republic President Algirdas Brazauskas and Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev and the signing of an agreement between Lithuania and Belarus.

Lithuania continues, even with its new authorities, to observe state interests, but the shift in foreign policy is obvious. It is a question of a switch to the track of Realpolitik, a shift away from national romanticism, and the building of good-neighborly, mutually advantageous relations.

The Democratic Party of Labor and its leader A. Brazauskas, while still in the process of battling for seats in the Seimas and later in the presidential election campaign, more than once focused attention on one of the most important priorities for the state: establishing normal relations with its neighbors. Among these states Belarus, Russia, and certain others were cited first and foremost. Of course, the fact that A. Brazauskas visited Belarus straight after his election as president is far from accidental. Advocating the principles of a truly humane policy, he well understands that it is impossible to cut yourself off, that the centuries-old ties between peoples are alive and well, and that far more can be achieved in economic reform in close, friendly relations.

And now A. Brazauskas has received in Vilnius Belarusian Prime Minister Vyacheslav Kebich. The result: After the conclusion of talks between the Lithuanian and Belarusian government delegations, interstate agreements were signed on free trade and trade and economic cooperation for 1993.

Judging by official statements, the meeting with A. Kozyrev was also friendly. A number of difficult problems have accumulated between Russia and Lithuania. It is essential that they are not solved through confrontation, the Russian foreign minister noted. Questions of the withdrawal of Russian troops—which, in the Lithuanian president's words, is being carried out "mostly satisfactorily," pensions for former servicemen, and the transit movements of Russia troops were raised.

You can feel that the ice has broken.

Delegation Head on Latvian Troop Withdrawal Talks

WS2303083693 Tallinn BNS in English 1136 GMT 22 Mar 93

[Text] Riga, Mar 22, BNS—Sergey Zotov, the leader of the Russian delegation at negotiations with Latvia, blamed Latvia for delaying the basic accord on the withdrawal of the Russian troops.

In a news conference in Moscow Friday [19 March], Zotov announced that Russia will remain firm on the final terms of the withdrawal. The deadline demanded by Latvia—to withdraw the troops until the end of this year—is still strictly opposed by Russia.

The Latvian daily Diena cites Zotov as saying that "if Latvia [words indistinct]. Latvia's position is influenced by the coming election campaign, he said. Because of that, anti-Russian moods flourish in Latvia, and aggravate the process of negotiations." Zotov says he does not expect any progress in the talks until after the 5th Saeima election.

The unsettled issues of military property, social guarantees for Russian military and the unclear future of strategic objects also delay the signing of the basic accord, Zotov explained.

The accord on social guarantees for Russian military and resigned officers was discussed at this round of negotiations. While Latvia was ready to sign the agreement, Zotov said that the accord was not signed, because Latvia introduced its proposals at the last moment.

Zotov stressed that during this round of talks, Russia focused on the issue of Russian residents' rights in Latvia, and announced: "Our opinion is that the policy of Russian-speaking residents' dislodging will continue in Latvia at official level."

Zotov noted that the protection of Russian citizens' rights is the priority of Russia's foreign policy.

Therefore, the Russian delegation will "continue to do everything possible to defend Russians in Latvia," he said.

However, Zotov says he hopes that in future Russia and Latvia become friendly states that will not interfere in each others' internal affairs.

Zotov rejected the notion that a proposal to discuss Russians' rights in an international forum interferes with Latvia's internal affairs.

European Bank's Attali on Russian Aid Needs

PM2303105193 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 13 Mar 93 First Edition p 3

[Correspondent Andrey Ostalskiy report: "European Bank Proposes New Aid Program for CIS Countries"]

[Text] London—In the next few days the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) will propose to the G7 countries a new program of aid for Russia and the CIS which could help the economic reform process. These proposals will be submitted for consideration by the world's most developed states, whose representatives are meeting in Hong Kong at the end of this week.

EBRD President Jacques Attali has refused to reveal the details of this plan, although he did say in conversation with your IZVESTIYA correspondent that, in his opinion, the West must help Russia and the CIS in the areas of achieving financial stability, financing the development of small businesses in Russia, carrying out disarmament and conversion, and creating a network of social guarantees for the population; it should also contribute to the vocational retraining of working people, including the training of former officers in civilian professions.

This announcement has come just when the U.S. Administration and the governments of other Western states are beginning to show signs of serious concern in connection with the development of events in Russia and the possibility that a transfer of power to conservative opponents of

reform in parliament could lead to sharp changes in Russia's domestic and foreign policy not in the West's interests.

Jacques Attali said that, in his opinion, the present government is "moving in the right direction" in the sphere of economic reforms, although it could "do much more" with regard to restricting the issue of money and credits in order to avoid hyperinflation, improving the tax collection mechanism, creating a network of social guarantees, combating the black market, and creating the conditions for converting military industry and developing small businesses.

Asked whether he felt that substantial aid for Russia from the West was overdue and that timely aid could have helped to prevent the crisis, Jacques Attali said: "There is no point going into historical analysis now to see who is right and who is to blame. It is important to understand that the time for action has come. It is important that the West understands that it can do far more to help Russia." He voiced the hope, however, that "many people in Moscow also understand that they too must do a great deal for this aid to be useful."

He said that the West needs a reliable partner in Moscow—someone with whom it can do business, with an administration enjoying popular support and a real central bank, which "could get hyperinflation under control and improve the efficiency of the tax collection mechanism." "This is two-way traffic," J. Attali stressed. He did not agree with the opinion of those who believe that, until recently, the EBRD has not counted Russia and the CIS as priorities, instead mainly concentrating its efforts on East European countries. "Every country is a priority for us," he said.

The EBRD president said that his bank's program for the current year proposes investments worth $10 billion, approximately 1 billion of which will be put up by the bank itself and the rest by private or state investors. He also said that the EBRD was the first to give credit for the private sector in Russia and that it has provided some $500 million for private foreign projects in Russia but hopes to achieve even more. The EBRD intends to actively promote Russian privatization. "We intend to help Mr. Chubays in this process," Jacques Attali said. He referred to the Russian "privatization minister" by name as the EBRD's partner on the very day when Ruslan Khasbulatov demanded that A. Chubays be immediately removed from this post.

Refusing to comment on this demand and on the remark by one parliamentary leader that an "efficient market economy" in Russia is impossible, the EBRD president said nevertheless that the bank's program is to help "market reforms" and privatization, rather than anything else. "It is another matter that rates of privatization may vary."

In conclusion, J. Attali voiced the hope that the West now better understands that help for Russia and the CIS is "vitally important" and that, if "chaos prevails" in these countries, it will be catastrophic not only for Russia but for the whole world.

Presidential Rule Declared

Official Reaction to Yeltsin's Decree Reported

Constitutional Court Ruling

LD2303163093 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1535 GMT 23 Mar 93

["Ruling of the Russian Federation Constitutional Court on compliance with the Russian Federation Constitution of the actions and decisions of Russian Federation President B.N. Yeltsin, connected with his address to the citizens of Russia on 20 March 1993"—ITAR-TASS headline]

[Text] 23 Mar, Moscow—The Russian Federation Constitutional Court, consisting of its chairman, V.D. Zorkin; deputy chairman N.V. Vitruk; secretary Y.D. Rudkin; and judges E.M. Ametistov, N.T. Vedernikov, G.A. Gadzhiyev, V.O. Luchin, T.G. Morshchakova, V.I. Oleynik, N.V. Seleznev, O.I. Tiunov, and B.S. Ebzeyev, met to examine the actions and decisions of the Russian Federation president connected with his address to the citizens of Russia on 20th March 1993.

The Court has issued this ruling under Part 1 of Article 75 of the Law on the Russian Federation Constitutional Court, following written proposals from G.A. Gadzhiyev and V.O. Luchin, judges of the Constitutional Court, and a submission from the Russian Federation Supreme Soviet.

Guided by article 165 (1) of the Russian Federation Constitution, by Point 2 of Part 2 of Article 1, and Part 4 of Article 1, and by Articles 74 and 77 of the Law on the Russian Federation Constitutional Court, the Russian Federation Constitutional Court ruled as follows:

On 20 March 1993 President Boris Yeltsin of the Russian Federation went on television to broadcast an address to the citizens of Russia and announced the introduction of "special rule until the overcoming of the power crisis." In that address the president of the Russian Federation reported on his assessments of the situation in the country and of the results of the Eighth (Extraordinary) Congress of People's Deputies of the Russian Federation, and on what decisions the president has adopted or intends to adopt.

The Constitutional Court shares the president's concern, expressed in his address, for the fate of the country, for the preservation of the unity and integrity of the Russian Federation and for interethnic accord. The Constitutional Court supports the aims set out in the address: to overcome the power crisis, to continue the course of political and economic reforms and radical changes in society, to guarantee to the full the observance of human rights and freedoms and the freedom of mass information, to ensure social order and to carry out measures to strengthen the social protection of the population, develop entrepreneurship and struggle against inflation and corruption.

The Constitutional Court is in sympathy with the desire expressed by the president to ensure the observance of the provisions of constitutional order of Russia, above all, sovereignty of the people, federalism, and the sharing of power, and to act in strict accordance with the Federal Treaty. This was also noted in the message of the Constitutional Court to the Eighth Congress of People's Deputies and the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation on the state of constitutional legality in the Russian Federation.

The Constitutional Court expressed serious concern about the violation of the principle of division of powers, and the confrontation between the legislature and the executive; it called for seeking constitutional ways and means to overcome the power crisis. The message from the Constitutional Court stressed that the situation was exacerbated by the unilateral interpretation of Part Two of Article 104 of the Constitution concerning the authority of the Congress of People's Deputies to take into consideration and resolve any issue that is under the jurisdiction of the Russian Federation.

The same applies to a similar provision in Point 26 of Part 1 of Article 109 of the Constitution concerning the powers of the Supreme Soviet.

The message pointed out that the above constitutional norms ought to be considered in conjunction with the provisions of Articles 1, 3, 72, 81(1) to 81(5), and other articles of the Constitution guaranteeing the principle of division of powers.

The aims declared in the president's appeal ensue from the current Constitution of the Russian Federation. At the same time some of the president's actions and decisions which are aimed at achieving these goals require checking by the Constitutional Court from the point of view of whether they are in keeping with the Constitution of the Russian Federation.

The president announced the decision taken by him and precisely the fact that he had signed the decree on a special regime of government until the crisis of power is overcome. The possibility of introducing a special regime of government is not envisaged by the Constitution or by legislation of the Russian Federation. Special forms of government can only be introduced in conditions of a state of emergency on the bases of and according to the procedure envisaged by the law.

In the address the president confirmed his commitment to ensure that the fundamentals of the constitutional system should be observed. However, the means that he has chosen are in contradiction to this aim. In his opinion, cooperation with the federal bodies of legislative power and the deputy corps currently in office is impossible.

While giving an assurance that the work of Russia's representative bodies of power is not suspended, the president also announced changes in delimitation of competence between the federal bodies of power which were fixed by the Constitution. The president's statement that under the circumstances of special rule, any decisions made by the bodies and officials which are aimed at abolishing and suspending the president's decrees and orders and resolutions of the government do not have legal

force, means limiting the powers of representative and court bodies. Fulfillment of these regulations makes it impossible for the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation to fulfill a part of its verification functions and for the Constitutional Court to fulfill a number of its powers in safeguarding the constitutional structure. This is leading toward denial of the supremacy of law fixed by the Constitution, and establishes the priority of the president's decrees as a result of which the powers of the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation in guaranteeing the unity of legislative control are limited. In essence, the principle of division of powers is destroyed.

In the appeal, the president announced his decision to fix the date for a vote of confidence in the president and the vice president of the Russian Federation on 25 April 1993. The voting wished for by the president can be fixed. However, if there is a vote of confidence in the president, this should not mean the elimination of other bodies of state power. Therefore the provision put forward in the appeal that the voting will decide the issue of who is the leader of the country—the president or the Congress of People's Deputies—is not permissible.

The president envisaged the conducting of a simultaneous vote of confidence in the president and the vice president, and on the draft new constitution of the Russian Federation and on the draft law on elections to the federal parliament. The submission by the president of the abovementioned draft laws for a nationwide vote contradict Article 5 and Part 5 of Article 104 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation and also the Law on Referendum of the Russian Federation.

The president decided that the draft constitution and the draft law on elections submitted by him for nationwide approval will come into force if the citizens of Russia support the president and the vice president. In this way the citizens will be forced to give only one answer—"for" or "against"—to three separate questions. This restricts the freedom of will of the citizens and contradicts Article 28 of the Law on Referenda of the Russian Federation, which says that if a nationwide vote on different draft decisions is held, all drafts will be put to the vote separately and independently of each other.

The introduction of a special regime of government contravenes the demarcation of powers and responsibilities between the Russian Federation and the subjects of the federation established by the federation treaty. The decision of the president that the heads of executive power and the governments of the subjects of the Russian Federation are directly accountable to the president and the government of Russia, and that their powers "cannot be terminated without a decision by the president of the Russian Federation" is an obvious interference in the jurisdiction of the subjects of the federation. It contradicts Part 3 of Article 81 (5) and Article 132 (2) of the Constitution of the Russian Federation and the federation treaty as well. Besides, one must take into consideration that the heads of administrations are also accountable to the appropriate soviets of people's deputies. This is provided for by Article 136 (4) of the Constitution of the Russian Federation and Article 35 of the Law of the Russian Federation "On kray and oblast Soviets of people's deputies and kray and oblast administrations."

In concluding the federation treaty, all subjects of the Russian Federation agreed that the demarcation of powers and responsibilities, established by the treaty, could not be unilaterally amended. This had to be done with the agreement of the republics, krays, oblasts and other subjects of the Russian Federation, as represented by their soviets of people's deputies. The president's decision amounts to a unilateral amendment of the federation treaty. This creates a real threat to the integrity of the Russian Federation.

On the basis of all this, and on the basis of Article 165 (2) of the Constitution of the Russian Federation and Articles 74 and 79 of the Law on the Russian Federation Constitutional Court, the Constitutional Court came to the following conclusion:

In his address to the citizens of Russia on 20 March 1993, the Russian Federation president announced his actions and decisions regarding the imposition of a special regime of government on the country until the crisis of power is resolved. A number of points in this address, as specified above, do not comply with Parts 1 and 2 of Article 1, Part 1 of Article 3, Part 2 of Article 4, Article 5, Part 3 of Article 81 (5), Part 5 of Article 104, and Articles 132 (2) and 136 (4) of the Russian Federation Constitution or with the federation treaty (specifically Article 7 on the demarcation of powers and responsibilities between the federal bodies of state power in the Russian Federation and the authorities of the sovereign republics making up the Russian Federation).

[Signed] V. D. Zorkin, chairman of the Russian Federation Constitutional Court;

Y.D. Rudkin, secretary of the Russian Federation Constitutional Court

Khasbulatov on Court's Ruling

OW2303134793 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1333 GMT 23 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Russian parliament chairman Ruslan Khasbulatov told a news conference in Moscow on Tuesday [23 March] that the Constitutional Court's decision "unambiguously means that an impeachment procedure could be started against the President." "It is for this purpose that the next Congress of People's Deputies will be convened," he said.

He described President Boris Yeltsin's Saturday appeal to the people as "a direct attempt at a coup d'etat."

Asked by an INTERFAX correspondent whether he feared that, if the President were impeached, the country would be split up into his supporters and enemies, with all the tragic consequences this might have, Khasbulatov replied that he did have such fears, but urged the peoples of Russia to "strictly obey the law and keep the peace."

Khasbulatov is also in favor of holding presidential and parliamentary elections.

"This must be done no matter what the congress decides," he said.

The reason, in his opinion, is that today's President and parliament were elected when the Soviet Union still existed, and "the people believed there was a supreme authority in the country, the Soviet bodies, which could correct any mistakes the Russian leadership made." Khasbulatov said the President's decision to call a referendum on confidence in him was a matter "for family games."

He added that the Vice-President would "not take part in any such games."

Vice-President Aleksandr Rutskoy on Tuesday morning specially visited the Constitutional Court to receive a copy of the court's decision on Yeltsin's Saturday appeal.

Khasbulatov's press secretary, Konstantin Zlobin, said the Constitutional Court's decision would be discussed by the Supreme Soviet at its evening session on Tuesday, following which Khasbulatov would hold a press conference.

Our correspondent also reports that the opinion is growing among the deputies to convene the Congress of People's Deputies on Friday to discuss the situation caused by President Yeltsin's appeal to the nation on March 20.

Impeachment Said 'Unconstitutional'

LD2303091793 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 0800 GMT 23 Mar 93

[Text] The following statement was issued by the press service of the president of the Russian Federation:

Pronouncements by some Russian Federation people's deputies and a number of officials have been circulated recently on the possibility of a direct impeachment of the president of the Russian Federation by the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation on the basis of Article 121.6 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation.

Without going into a legal assessment of the constitutional validity of the activity of the president of the Russian Federation, since this is the prerogative of the Constitutional Court of the Russian Federation, we would like to draw attention to the following: In the text of the Law of the Russian Federation of 9 December 1993 [as heard] on amendments and supplements to the Constitution of the Basic Law of the Russian Federation published in issue No. 2, 1993, of the Gazette of the Congress of People's Deputies of the Russian Federation and the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation, the footnote to Article 54 of the Law advises that Article 121.6 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation concerning the direct impeachment of the president of the Russian Federation does not come into effect until the holding of a referendum on the Basic Provisions of the draft of a new Constitution of the Russian Federation.

This provision is now an inalienable part of the existing Constitution of the Russian Federation. Consequently, in accordance with the Constitution of the Russian Federation, the president of the Russian Federation cannot be directly impeached.

Parliament Rejects Impeachment Views

LD2303130893 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1248 GMT 23 Mar 93

[Text] Moscow March 23 TASS—The press centre of the Russian parliament distributed a statement on Tuesday rejecting an earlier statement of the presidential press service that the president cannot be impeached under acting Constitution until a referendum on the basics of a new main law is held.

The presidential press centre said a footnote in the Russian Law "On amendments and additions to the Constitution of the Russian Federation" of December 9, 1992 says that the Article 121-6 of the Constitution which envisages immediate impeachment of the president does not come into force "until the holding of a referendum on the basic provisions of the draft of a new Russian constitution".

The parliamentary press centre qualified the statement as "surprisingly and juridically naive".

It said that the mentioned footnote to Article 54 of the law of December 9, 1992 is only a reference note.

The presidential press service said the footnote is a legal norm and an indispensable part of the Constitution.

The parliamentary press centre recalled that Russian president had confirmed that the footnote "was not included into the text of the law" in his letter to the parliament of December 25, 1992.

The footnote became completely invalid after the latest Congress of People's Deputies cancelled the agreement between the president and the congress adopted last December and Article 121-6 of the Constitution thus came into full force, the parliamentary press centre said.

Yeltsin Spokesman's Statement

LD2303063893 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0632 GMT 23 Mar 93

[Text] Moscow March 23 TASS—"The two days that have passed since President Boris Yeltsin's address allow one to draw the first conclusions about its significance and impact," says a statement by the Russian president's press secretary. The six-point document says:

"The population received with understanding the president's proposals for a way out of crisis. Worker collectives point to the full solidarity of the government and president, which ensures a normal rhythm for the country and the economy. The proposals contained in the president's address to the Russian citizens are receiving increasingly widespread support in the country.

2. In line with Boris Yeltsin's decree, the Army stays completely away from interference in politics. Although

some circles in the Supreme Soviet are bent on involving the military in the confrontation, the Army remains faithful to the law.

3. The Supreme Soviet's attempts to build up tension by rash and legally unjustified evaluations fail to draw a response among the population.

4. Noteworthy is the hasty and unilateral position of the Constitutional Court chairman who prior to the examination by the court of the address and other documents and contrary to legal ethics has already evaluated them himself.

5. The unanimous support by the world public, governments and political leaders of modern law-governed states of Yeltsin's proposals for a way out of the constitutional crisis confirms anew that the president's actions are legitimate.

6. The reaction to the president's address to the nation has highlighted the true supporters of democratic reforms and those who having occupied high state posts as a result of the president's victory in 1991 did not pass the test for loyalty in the moment of the decisive choice."

No 'Violations' in Decree

LD2303100793 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0953 GMT 23 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent ivan ivanov]

[Text] Moscow March 23 TASS—Russian First Vice-Premier Vladimir Shumeyko believes the presidential decree on the special regime of government may be published already today. Addressing a seminar on the state's policy in respect to young people and problems linked with its implementation here today, he said the decree would "come into force from the moment of its publication".

Shumeyko stressed that "there is not a single violation of the Constitution" in the decree. "The crux of the decree is that a referendum on confidence in the president and vice-president, as well as on the draft of the new Russian constitution is fixed for April 25," he recalled.

Replying to ITAR-TASS, Shumeyko said that the paragraph saying that decision of state and legislative bodies, adopted without any ruling of the Constitutional Court and intended to annul or suspend presidential decrees have no juridical power, would not be deleted from the decree. He also explained that the decree was not published on Saturday, when President Yeltsin signed it, because "lengthy office work" was needed to prepare, multiply and mail such documents, "while Saturday and Sunday were days-off in corresponding structures of the apparatus."

In his statement to the seminar, Shumeyko said that if the Russian parliament annulled the president's decree during the joint meeting of its two chambers on Thursday, "we shall nevertheless hold the referendum with the help of executive authorities and shall try to avoid disorders". He also said that the president "may order the heads of local executive authorities to set up election constituencies and also to form a central elections commission consisting of members of the Presidium of the Russian Council of Ministers, representatives from elected bodies and regions". The first vice-premier did not rule out the possibility of a U.N. commission being invited to take part in the work of the commission.

Shumeyko stressed that there "can be no Russia, no single Russia, without a strong executive branch of government". "The executive authorities today need a vote of confidence, as well as moral and political support to continue the reforms," he added. According to Shumeyko, the president's opponents were "now exploiting the juridical illiteracy of the population in their maneuvers".

Shumeyko also said that the constitutional commission, headed by President Yeltsin over the past three years, had already drawn up a draft of a new constitution. "The April 25 vote may not only give us a chance to continue the reforms, but also to continue the work on the new constitution, on the setting up of a constitutional assembly that is to adopt it".

Taking part in the work of the current conference are members of the Russian Government, representatives from youth committees of Russia's constituent republics, territories and regions, representatives of regional administrations.

Early Elections 'Inevitable'

LD2303123893 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1222 GMT 23 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondents Anatoliy Aladinskiy and Yuriy Filippov]

[Text] Moscow March 23 TASS—Russian parliament Speaker Ruslan Khasbulatov believes early elections of legislators and the president are inevitable in Russia regardless of any decisions adopted by Boris Yeltsin and the parliament.

"No matter whether the president or legislators want elections or not the society will face a situation which will bring authorities to this (elections)", he said at a press conference on Tuesday.

Khasbulatov blasted the "power methods" which the president had resorted to and qualified them as "a fact of direct state coup". The speaker believes that the current constitutional crisis does not boil down only to personal contradictions between him and the president. The major reason is the bankruptcy of all governmental programmes of reforms which lacked attention to social issues.

"Those people who on behalf of the people carry out radical reforms feel that they had exhausted the possibility of implementing the reforms by peaceful and democratic means", Khasbulatov said.

He added that it is quite natural that the Constitutional Court ruled the actions of the president as "independent

activities which violate several articles of the Constitution". Only the congress may pass the final verdict to the activities of legislative and executive authorities, he stressed.

"I cannot anticipate either the decisions of the parliament or, moreover, of the congress. But if the decision on impeachment is passed the presidential powers automatically are transferred to the vice-president", the speaker said.

Khasbulatov denied reports that communist forces are seeking revenge in Russia and said many foreign leaders put their stakes on the wrong force.

"No threat of a communist revenge exists at present". "Leaders of many states, mislead by mass media, were overhasty in expressing personal support to the actions of the president", he said, adding that the leaders "should better support democracy in Russia".

Russia currently is not facing a struggle between "reformers" and "anti-reformers", but between the course of reforms and obstacles which impede it, according to the speaker. "The parliament and the congress are artificially labelled as anti-reformist", he added.

The address of the president to the nation is fraught with a real danger to the territorial integrity of the country and it was for this reason that the Constitutional Court began to consider it immediately postponing a ruling on the constitutionality of the decisions of the latest congress, according to Khasbulatov.

The speaker believes the popular confidence vote to the president proposed by Boris Yeltsin cannot end the constitutional crisis in the country. Instead, early elections of legislature and the president are necessary. "Now Russia is a different state and voters have to come to the polls again", he said.

Supreme Soviet Appeal

LD2203173393 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1612 GMT 22 Mar 93

["Text" of "Appeal of the Russian Supreme Soviet to the Parliaments, Governments, and Peoples of the Countries of the World, Adopted at the Sitting of the Supreme Soviet on 21 March"]

[Text] Moscow, 22 March (ITAR-TASS)—On 20 March 1993 the president of the Russian Federation made an attempt to halt the work of the representative power bodies, which were elected in accordance with the constitution, by announcing the so-called special period of ruling the country.

The constitution of the Russian Federation includes no provisions for such actions, which not only undermine the foundations of the constitutional system of Russia, but also create a direct threat to freedoms, rights and the safety of Russian citizens. The very fate of democracy in Russia is threatened.

Through their own historical experience, our people know very well what happens when attempts are made to achieve even quite noble ideas through violent and forceful means. It is, therefore, no coincidence that President B. Yeltsin's actions have not been supported by either the vice president of the Russian Federation or the chairman of the Constitutional Court of the Russian Federation.

In this connection, it is surprising and regrettable to see the official position of a number of states, which have traditionally been considered as democratic, supporting the anti-constitutional actions of President B. Yeltsin. The Parliament of the Russian Federation declares that it will not allow any interference in the internal affairs of the Russian Federation.

The Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation appeals to the parliaments, governments, and peoples of the world to show wisdom and restraint, and to avoid actions which would threaten the young Russian democracy.

Deputy Attacks 'Hypocrisy'

LD2303103293 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1309 GMT 23 Mar 93

[Remarks by Deputy Sergey Nosovets, with interjections by Russian Federation Supreme Soviet Chairman Ruslan Khasbulatov, at emergency session of the Supreme Soviet on 23 March—live]

[Text] [Nosovets] Nosovets, Omsk national territorial constituency No.56. I would also support your proposal to disperse, Ruslan Imranovich [Khasbulatov], for several reasons.

First, it was an gross violation for Zorkin, chairman of the Constitutional Court, to lead and take part in the court session, because he had already called the president's actions a crime, and according to the law he had no right to be in the court.

[Khasbulatov] Let me ask you.

[Nosovets] I have a proposal.

[Khasbulatov] Well that is different.

[Nosovets] That is the first thing.

[Khasbulatov] Are you, Nosovets, above the Constitutional Court?

[Nosovets] Please, Ruslan Imranovich, can I finish speaking? Second, second, today's meeting here to pull apart the personality of the president is, in principle, the height of hypocrisy and cynicism, on the very day when, just a few hours ago, he buried his mother.

[Khasbulatov] That is why we proposed this.

[Nosovets] This is simply shameless. Well, we shouldn't have gathered in the first place.

[Khasbulatov] Microphone four please. That is why I proposed this and you backed it. There is no point in repeating my words.

Filatov, Shumeyko Voice Support for Yeltsin

LD2203203193 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1900 GMT 22 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Oleg Velichko]

[Text] Moscow, 22 Mar—A meeting of representatives of citizens of Russia, attended by representatives of political parties and movements of democratic orientation, trade unions, and public organizations, has expressed its full support for the Russian president and a readiness to hold an all-Russian referendum on 25 April.

Opening the meeting, Sergey Filatov, head of the Russian president's administration, stated that, starting from the Sixth Congress of Russian People's Deputies, executive and legislative powers have displayed a marked difference in approaches toward the implementation of economic reform in Russia. He stressed that legislative power has been constantly trying to make executive power subordinate to itself.

In Sergey Filatov's view, in the current political situation Boris Yeltsin adopted the only correct decision, that is to appeal to Russian citizens. Sergey Filatov described the president's position in his appeal to the Russian people as "highly ethical and morally unblemished," and called on everyone to support it. "Support for Boris Yeltsin consists precisely of holding a referendum on 25 April," he stressed.

Sergey Filatov condemned the stance taken by the Supreme Soviet and the Constitutional Court with regard to the Russian president's statement. He said it looks as though legislative and judicial powers were waiting for the president's appeal and were preparing for it.

The head of the Russian president's administration informed those gathered that Boris Yeltsin has prepared a number of decrees which envisage protection of the mass media, strengthening the activity of executive authority, and a number of others.

Vladimir Shumeyko, first deputy chairman of the Council of Ministers, confirmed that the decree which Boris Yeltsin announced on television on Saturday has been signed by the president and will soon be published.

Touching on the contents of the decree iteslf, Vladimir Shumeyko noted that it rests on two basic tenets—on Russians having confidence in the president and the vice president, and the adoption of a new Constitution of Russia. In the words of the vice premier, the new Constitution envisages the creation of completely different legislative bodies, reinforces the necessary separation of powers in society, and also has a number of other fundamentally important aspects.

Vladimir Shumeyko believes that today there are only two ways out of the economic crisis—first, progress along the path of reforms started by the Russian president, envisaging a restructuring of the economy, a rigorous financial policy, and targeted social assistance for the needy, and second, the so-called soft entry into the market, which implies a departure from the reforms.

The vice premier stated that in holding the referendum—and he has no doubts that it will be held—the organizers intend to address the international community and the United Nations with the aim of acknowledging the referendum's legitimacy and legality.

Shumeyko Says Rutskoy's Behavior 'Cowardly'

OW2203204593 Moscow INTERFAX in English 2033 GMT 22 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The President has been continuously resisted by the other two branches of power in his democratic reforms, First Vice- Premier Vladimir Shumeyko told a meeting of democratically-minded public in Moscow Monday. "Unfortunately, the Constitutional Court has also gone into politics," he emphasized. At this point shouts of "Down with Zorkin" were heard. Shumeyko said that the "slogan is very good but the President has to stay in the framework of the Constitution." Shumeyko said that the decrees which the President mentioned in his March 20 address will be published within a few days. He explained that they have not been published because the President "was very busy on March 21." What is more, the President is grieved by the death of his mother.

Shumeyko referred to the posture taken by Vice-President Aleksandr Rutskoy as cowardly, "unworthy of our President." Still, he made it clear that in the voting the question will be one of confidence in Yeltsin personally even though there will be another name on the ballot." Shumeyko noted that if the Congress bans the referendum, "it has no power to ban popular discussion whose findings also have an overriding legal power." It will be run by the presidential election mechanism. Shumeyko also expressed the hope that the heads of republics incorporated in the Russian Federation will support the President at the decisive hour.

Khasbulatov Adjourns Emergency Session 23 Mar

LD2303135593 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1309 GMT 23 Mar 93

[Remarks by Russian Federation Supreme Soviet Chairman Ruslan Khasbulatov at emergency session of the Supreme Soviet—live]

[Text] Esteemed colleagues, we really have to bear in mind how complex and tragic the situation is. We are all human beings. So, I ask you ... [changes thought] you were right to express support. There shouldn't be any especially hard feelings among us against the Constitutional Court. They worked right through the night. Obviously they are tired. Therefore, of course, we must study the Constitutional Court's conclusions in a calm manner.

Tomorrow morning we will gather again and discuss in a calm and considered manner what we are going to do. Let there not be any more protests, please. The country is in a

complex situation. Discussion of the handling of the session is ending. So, I ask you all to disperse and work on the Court's conclusions. We will gather again at 1000 tomorrow. Thank you.

Press Service Reports 9:1 Support for Yeltsin Measures

LD2303112593 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1005 GMT 23 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent]

[Text] Moscow, 23 Mar—Judging by the mail that continues to arrive for Boris Yeltsin in response to his address to the citizens of Russia, the ratio of supporters and opponents of the Russian president's measures is nine to one, according to a presidential press service report issued here.

Supporters of the president approve of his position and support his actions and the course of continuing the democratic reforms, the report notes. They "express confidence that his actions will lead to a resolution of the political crisis, the restoration of the balance between the executive and legislative branches of power and the stabilization of the economy." In the reactions "it is pointed out that the president's policy blocks the attempts of the old nomenklatura to effect a leap backwards toward totalitarianism under the guise of absolute power of the soviets."

The president, according to the press service, is supported in particular by the regional organizations of parties of the democratic tendency in Smolensk, Volgograd, Kursk, the Congress of the Cossack population of the Donetsk district of the Don Host region [Donetskiy okrug oblasti Voyska Donskogo], the Small Council of people's deputies of Tomsk, the heads of administration of Amur, Sverdlovsk, Samara, and Chelyabinsk Oblasts, Khabarovsk and Maritime Krays, and many others.

"Most of the authors of negative reactions to the president's appeal do not hide their calculations on either the nationwide poll being cancelled or victory going to the supporters of the Brezhnev version of the Constitution," the report of the press service notes. The position of the vice president is unambiguously assessed in a number of communications from citizens.

Yeltsin's Kremlin Guard Deemed 'Direct Threat' to Peace

LD2303124393 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1130 GMT 23 Mar 93

[Text] Moscow, 23 Mar (ITAR-TASS)—The Russian Supreme Soviet press center has released the following statement:

"It was very popular at one time for the press to publish debates on the subject of the 'parliamentary guard,' the 'cutthroats armed to the teeth' subordinated to the Supreme Soviet chairman alone. The fuss over a couple hundred members of the parliamentary buildings' security staff did not die down even after their duties had been placed on a legal footing, and it went on for as long as was evidently needed for 'in-house' armed formations under the jurisdiction of the president in person to be set up—formations that remain essentially illegal since there is no relevant legal enactment on the subject. By a strange linkup of circumstances, the mass media is interested only in the militiamen of the House of Soviets guard and not in the functions of the thousands of staff who allegedly guard the head of the executive power.

"Yet, there is rich food for thought here; for example, on the subject of the functions of the units solely subordinate to the president—that is, the Alfa special subunits or the 11,000-strong personnel of the Main Guard Directorate [russ glavnoye upravleniye okhrany], whose upkeep costs 18 billion rubles. However, it emerges that these dozen or so thousands of men are insufficient to ensure the protection of just one man, albeit the supreme official. And now, following the president's now-familiar address, his press secretary has announced that another decree has been signed, this time on setting up what is essentially a presidential guard, based on the separate Kremlin Regiment of the Moscow Kremlin commandant's office. The activities of another 5,500 armed men will be regulated not by the existing laws but by the personal will of the supreme official. In the present alarming situation, this constitutes a direct threat to civil peace in the country."

Commander Denies Troops Moving Toward Moscow

LD2303132193 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1242 GMT 23 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Vladimir Gondusov]

[Text] Moscow, 23 Mar—"Unit personnel are at their permanently assigned stations conducting their usual training," Major General Igor Rubtsov, commander of the Dzherzhinskiy division of Russian internal troops, told ITAR-TASS today. The commander of the division, which is stationed about 100 km from the Russian capital, was responding to reports that the unit had allegedly been put on combat alert and was moving toward Moscow. The division commander said that he had received no instructions on redeploying the troops.

General: Army Not To Be Used in Political Struggle

OW2303110893 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1059 GMT 23 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Russian Armed Forces will not be used in the domestic political struggle and all attempts to do so will be viewed as undermining the defense capability of the country. In all cases the use of the army will be determined by the constitution. The statement was made at a Tuesday [23 March] meeting with journalists by a senior official

from the Russian Defense Ministry, Major-General Gennadiy Ivanov. He spoke of the principles of the Russian military doctrine formulated by his ministry.

The doctrine drafted by the ministry should be such that it would not change with changes in the leadership of Russia, the general emphasized.

Russia does not view a single country as its potential adversary. It does not deny the possibility of wars but stands for the peaceful settlement of disputes, respect for territorial integrity and non-interference in the internal affairs of others. Russia can use armed force against another state only for defense if its allies or Russia itself is attacked, the official stressed.

Russia will keep up its strategic nuclear force at a level guaranteeing stability and the prevention of large-scale conventional as well as nuclear wars and its general purpose force at a level guaranteeing reliable defense against local aggressions.

[Moscow ITAR-TASS in English at 1000 GMT on 23 March adds: "While society is debating the possibility of impeaching President Boris Yeltsin and discussing other collisions and changes in the politics, it must be stressed that the Army was and remains on the side of a Constitution, on the side of the people in principle. Our Army is accomplishing the tasks which protect the interests of the individual, society and the state, Major-General Gennadiy Ivanov, chief of the Defence Ministry's Military Building and Reform Department, told a briefing in the Defence Ministry today. 'The Army is looking forward to a compromise and hoping for it', he stressed.

["General Ivanov noted that the Russian military doctrine which is being worked out now contains such conceptual approaches which permit to hope that the Army will not be subject to great changes with the change of political leaders. The political section of the military doctrine lays down that the use of armed forces in domestic political struggles is ruled out: It will be seen as actions aimed at undermining the country's defence capacity.

["The country's defence potential, combat readiness and capability are now in line with the present realities, Major-General Gennadiy Ivanov said."]

Yerin Orders Security Forces To Stay in Moscow

AU2303085493 Paris AFP in English 0822 GMT 23 Mar 93

[Text] Moscow, March 23 (AFP)—Russian Interior Minister Viktor Yerin on Tuesday ordered a division of security troops to stay in Moscow, an official at the ministry headquarters said.

The division of more than 10,000 troops specializing in maintaining law and order was to stay in the Russian capital "to prevent any mass unrest," said the official, who requested anonymity.

The Dzerzhinskiy division was to have left for Vladikavkaz in northern Ossetia on Tuesday to relieve troops implementing the state of emergency in the troubled Caucasus region.

Defense, Security Ministries Deny Approving Yeltsin Decree

OW2203204893 Moscow INTERFAX in English 2034 GMT 22 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] At the Russian Defense Ministry, Interfax learned that reports by much of the mass media that Pavel Grachev had approved the president's decree on introducing special rule "do not correspond with reality." "Certain political forces," our source said, "are trying to pass off wishes for reality."

Sources at the Russian Security Ministry Monday night once again denied reports that Minister Viktor Barannikov had approved Boris Yeltsin's decree.

In addition to this, at the Security Ministry's public relations department, Interfax learned that on March 22 the collegium of the ministry only discussed the necessity of activating work to rehabilitate those illegally repressed and the fight with terrorism.

No other issues arose at the meeting, a Security Ministry representative said.

Constitutional Court Judge Discusses Crisis

PM2303085393 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 23 Mar 93 First Edition pp 1, 2

[Interview with Constitutional Court judge Boris Ebzeyev by Inna Muravyeva under the rubric "Constitutional Court"; place and date not given: "It Is Difficult To Remain Above the 'Fray' in Our Times"—first paragraph is introduction]

[Text] Our conversation with Constitutional Court judge Boris Ebzeyev is on the serious crisis in the organs of power and the Constitutional Court's stance on this bitter confrontation.

[Muravyeva] Boris Safarovich, on 21 March the Constitutional Court on its own initiative undertook to examine what we might call "the case of the president's appeal."

[Ebzeyev] I should remark that it is perhaps one of democracy's greatest triumphs (if the two terms—triumph and democracy—can be used together), that is, one of democracy's greatest triumphs lies in the fact that at long last every Russian citizen is equal with all other citizens before the laws. In other words, no one is exempt from the control of the people and the state structures created by the people—not the president, nor the chairman of parliament, nor the chairman of the Constitutional Court, nor any official of the Russian Federation. And in the given situation, I think that we are talking about judicial verification of the constitutionality of the actions and decisions

of the supreme official of the Russian Federation and the head of the executive organ of power.

Incidentally, before this we have verified the constitutionality of a whole series of individual acts issued by the chairman of the Supreme Soviet, his first deputy, and other deputies.

[Muravyeva] But the petition to verify that these acts were in line with the Constitution came from people's deputies. Why was examination of this case initiated by you, the Constitutional Court?

[Ebzeyev] I will answer sincerely. Because today we have an all too complex, irregular situation. Moreover, our "own initiative" is fully in line with the Russian Federation Law on the Constitutional Court—such a procedure is prescribed in Article 165/1 of the Constitution; it is also prescribed in Article 74 of the Russian Federation Law on the Constitutional Court. So it is not by chance that we set in train the procedures to examine the constitutionality of the actions and decisions of the highest Russian official and head of the executive branch.

I should remark that the Supreme Soviet session held 21 March also—in accordance with the law—made a request of its own to the Constitutional Court.

It is not only a question of verifying the constitutionality of the actions and decisions of one official (I want to stress this especially). It is a question of verifying the constitutionality of the actions and decisions of a whole series of officials. I would not like to mention their names. But as recently as 21 March several officials—extremely high-ranking ones—attended the Constitutional Court at its request, its summons, its invitation...

[Muravyeva] On Sunday, for example, Sergey Shahkray and Sergey Filatov attended?

[Ebzeyev] I would rather not talk about this.

[Muravyeva] But it is already being widely discussed.

[Ebzeyev] Well, if it is being so widely discussed, this information does not come from me.

[Muravyeva] So what kind of conversation was it? Even without naming names.

[Ebzeyev] It was a very serious conversation. It is necessary to at last realize one simple truth. Incidentally, I noted with satisfaction that this truth was also uttered on Sunday at the Supreme Soviet session. I mean this: At long last we have realized that it is necessary to obey our Constitution to the letter. A pity, of course, that it is only now, in a period of extraordinary situations, that we are beginning to turn to such ideas. But after all, unless we act on these simple premises, we are incapable in our social, legal, and political practice of developing normally, as a civilized society.

[Muravyeva] But all the same, Boris Safarovich... What is it that you have undertaken to examine, to process? The president's appeal? But he has the right to appeal to the people. Or have you undertaken to examine edicts, the texts of which, as far as I know, you do not possess?

[Ebzeyev] No, we do not have the texts of the edicts, but we do have the relevant appeal, and we have certain other information which is being imparted by the officials invited here, to the Constitutional Court.

It should not be forgotten that any official, wherever and in whatever capacity he works, must live according to the Constitution. And the decisions made by such a person must be in line with the Constitution.

[Muravyeva] I really must ask you a question—the Law on the Constitutional Court says that members of the Constitutional Court are not entitled to make statements from a personal point of view before the examination of a case in court. Right now there is a lot of talk that Valeriy Dmitriyevich Zorkin [chairman of the Constitutional Court] has made statements before a collective ruling on "the case of the president's appeal," which he allegedly had no right to do.

[Ebzeyev] I cannot clarify this point absolutely. Yes, when it comes to cases which the court has already undertaken to examine, we do not have the right to speak our minds before a final ruling. Here, however, another norm is operative. The chairman of the Constitutional Court acted in line with the Law on the Constitutional Court. Until a case commences, any of us can share his opinions and standpoint. When Valeriy Dmitriyevich spoke out, this case had not yet been accepted for examination by the Constitutional Court.

[Muravyeva] Reveal a "secret," if you would. Was there or was not there not a Constitutional Court ruling on this question before the chairman's statement? Or was the chairman giving his personal standpoint?

[Ebzeyev] No, this was not just the chairman's personal stance. Actually before the president's statement we had two meetings within the walls of the Constitutional Court. And it was here, within these walls, in the presence of members of the Constitutional Court, that its chairman addressed a letter to Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin.

[Muravyeva] How many members of the Constitutional Court were present at this meeting?

[Ebzeyev] Whoever spoke, we were acting within the framework of entrenched democratic procedures—there was a quorum, and the vote was carried by a majority. The letter to the president was supported by absolutely all colleagues who were at the meeting.

[Muravyeva] You have always stressed—and this is inscribed in the Law on the Constitutional Court—that you, the judicial branch of power, should be above the political fray. Have you not in recent times been dragged into the very whirlpool of this fray; have you not backed away from your main task—to be the supreme judge?

[Ebzeyev] I am very much afraid that, probably, the Constitutional Court at the present time cannot take the stance of that chronicler-monk who gazed at the world

with invariable indifference [reference to Pimen in Pushkin's "Boris Godunov"]. But... the defense of the constitutional order was and remains our main task. "One small trifle" must be taken into account: If the constitutional order of the Russian Federation is destroyed, there will be nothing for the Constitutional Court to defend.

Incidentally, it is not simply a question of the constitutional system being destroyed. It is a question of the consequences of this destruction. The example of Yugoslavia should especially worry us. Today it is essential for everyone to realize that we have a great past. We have an extremely difficult present, and I very much hope that we have a prosperous and great future.

So, to conclude the answer to your question, I can firmly state that we, the Constitutional Court, were and remain above the "seething of political storms." But if various political forces act in unconstitutional forms or commit unconstitutional actions, in that case—and only in that case—the Constitutional Court becomes a participant in the corresponding juridical process. I specially stress—juridical process.

I am well aware that our Constitution is imperfect. But right now the problem lies elsewhere—in the imperfection of its practical implementation. At the same time the Constitution provides for a strong executive power, including the president and the government, and a strong legislative power. The problem is not a shortage of powers, but searching for and stting up an effective mechanism for the separation of powers.

Supreme Soviet Criticizes 'Itogi' Program

LD2203215393 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 2126 GMT 22 Mar 93

[Text] Moscow March 23 TASS—The press centre of the Russian Supreme Soviet today issued a statement in connection with the content of the Itogi news programme of the Ostankino Television and Radio Broadcasting Company, which was shown last Sunday and was devoted to events in the political life in Russia following President Boris Yeltsin's address to the nation.

If one is to believe Itogi, the "hasty" actions and decisions by the Supreme Soviet as well as the Constitutional Court, who let loose on the president an avalanche of criticism for his good intentions expressed in the appeal to the people, are simply incomprehensible and inadequate to the situation.

Certainly, one can analyse in detail the entire technology of twisting facts and quotations applied in Itogi, but the main idea is understandable—to show the imaginary unsoundness of the Supreme Soviet's firm position to protect the constitutional system, the statement says. The main trump card of the propaganda campaign is that parliament does not have the authentic text of the decrees on introducing special rule until the power crisis is overcome.

However, the masterminds and executers of the propaganda campaign deliberately distort the essence of the problem, the statement says. At point in both the Supreme Soviet's resolution and inquiry sent to the Constitutional Court is "not the decrees, whether they exist or not, about the signing of which the president announced for the whole country to hear but his appeal itself and his move to make public his actions to impose special rule in the country until the power crisis is overcome."

The statement describes as the most ingenuine publicity stunt the constant citing of the part in the president's appeal which says that "the Congress and the Supreme Soviet are not dissolved. In the process, it passes over in silence that the text of the appeal then contains a demand under which "any decisions by bodies and officials which are aimed at abrogating or suspending the decrees and instructions by the president and government are invalid." Herein lies the essence of unconstitutional attempts by the president to assume the powers of both representative and judicial authorities.

Certainly, in supplanting the problem of evaluating whether the president acted in line with the Constitution with the issue of their legal framing, one can disorientate the public opinion, the statement says. Why should an ordinary citizen know that presidential decrees can enter force even without publication, for instance right after they are made public. Making the content of the decree public knowledge on radio and television can also be such a case.

One can prove to someone that there were no decrees and, hence, no problems. But one cannot convince the people that nothing has happened and the country heard and saw nothing, the statement says.

Trade Unions 'Will Not Hinder' Referendum

LD2303130293 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1100 GMT 23 Mar 93

[From the "Vesti" newscast]

[Excerpts] Representatives of the Independent Trade Unions, the Congress of Left Democratic Forces, and the Civic Union expressed today their positions with regard to the president's actions. [passage omitted]

Igor Klochkov, the head of the Independent Trade Unions, thinks there were good grounds for Yeltsin's appeal to the people about confidence in him. He said the trade union will not hinder the nationwide voting. However, he thinks that the holding of new elections is the most radical step at present. A law on elections should be prepared in the parliament jointly with public organizations and trade unions.

Andrey Golovin, a Civic Union representative in the parliament, said that the issue of presidential decrees should be examined by the Congress of People's Deputies. If the Constitutional Court rules these decrees to be unconstitutional, the Congress has the right to impeach the president.

INTERFAX Reports Reaction to Yeltsin Decree

'Democratic Organizations'

OW2203211993 Moscow INTERFAX in English 2037 GMT 22 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] A committee of democratic organizations which was set up in Moscow Monday has supported the April 20 presidential appeal. The committee incorporates representatives of the "Democratic Russia" movement, the People's Party, the Russian Social Liberal Party, the Young Russia League, the Christian Democratic Union, the Peasant's Party, the Russian Confederation of Free Trade Unions, and the Association of Flying Crew Trade Unions.

The documents adopted at the March 22 session of the committee express support for Boris Yeltsin's desire "to end the uncertainty and take on full responsibility for the situation in the country."

The committee called on Russia's citizens to obey presidential authority and ignore resolutions of the Supreme Soviet and the Congress of People's Deputies that are in conflict with presidential decrees. If these bodies "escalate the confrontation" to deprive Yeltsin of power, the committee calls on the Russian citizens to declare strike alerts and start a civil disobedience campaign.

Most parties and organizations represented on the committee wanted to hold a meeting in support of Yeltsin in the Russian capital March 28.

Yaroslavl Council

OW2203212693 Moscow INTERFAX in English 2039 GMT 22 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Small Council of the Yaroslavl Region Council supports President Yeltsin's decision to hold a referendum April 25 on confidence in the President.

In a statement adopted Monday this decision is described as "the only possible way to resolve the political crisis in a civilized way." On the other hand, the Small Council feel "that the other issues raised in the presidential address must be resolved in strict compliance with the fundamentals of Russia's constitutional order."

RANU Statement

OW2203214593 Moscow INTERFAX in English 2037 GMT 22 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The death throws of two specters," [quotation marks as received] was how the Russian All-National Union (RANU) described the fight between the Russian president and parliament, between the "democrats" and the "communists." The union claimed in a statement on the recent events in Russia that both sides are incapable of leading the country out of its dead-end.

RANU said that the crisis could only be solved by "turning to the traditions of thousand-year-old Russia." The union feels that Russian President Boris Yeltsin's actions on March 20 were unconstitutional. The statement stresses the need for simultaneous resignations and re-elections of the president and the deputy corps, "but no sooner than fall of this year."

RANU is a social and political movement with 15 branches in Russia. The union's goal, according to its platform statement, is "the spiritual and political unification of Russia and of nations connected to it, the defense of Russian national-state interests, and the spiritual, cultural, and economic rebirth of historic Russia."

Moscow 'Small Council'

OW2203214793 Moscow INTERFAX in English 2038 GMT 22 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Small Council of the Moscow Council evaluated Boris Yeltsin's Saturday statement as "an attempt on the constitutional structure, threatening the security of Russia and the possibility of further reforms." In a statement Monday the Small Council confirmed its devotion to the Russian constitution and to Russian law.

The Small Council called on Muscovites to observe the constitution and the laws of the Russian Federation, and to maintain peace and order.

Reaction From Regions Still Being Observed

Moscow Mayor Comments

OW2203212193 Moscow INTERFAX in English 2037 GMT 22 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Mayor of Moscow, Yuriy Luzhkov, has described as justifiable Russian President Boris Yeltsin's decision to introduce special rule in Russia until the political crisis is overcome. "Boris Yeltsin chose to act resolutely and vigorously," he told Interfax on Monday.

"The deputies have put the President in an unbearable position, making him unable to ensure the normal functioning of the executive branch," said Luzhkov. "If he had held his tongue, he would end up having his role as President nullified. He would be deprived of his powers as head of the executive branch." The deputies, Luzhkov said, had made amendments to the Constitution giving priority rights to the legislative branch, and putting severe restrictions on the President's rights.

"A referendum on confidence in the President must be held, and a whole series of measures should be taken to return to the executive branch its powers and put all branches of authority on an equal basis," Luzhkov said.

Otherwise, "the country will go back to the political system which existed for several decades and was rejected by the people." However, "the deputies today are afraid of the new elections proposed by the President and of the referendum," Luzhkov said.

He is sure the President still enjoys the Russians' support and trust.

Russian Public Opinion Noted

LD2303095193 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0920 GMT 23 Mar 93

[Text] Moscow March 23 TASS—Reports on the Russian people's reaction to President Yeltsin's TV address continue to arrive here:

Ulan-Ude. The twelfth session of the Buryat Supreme Soviet, now under way here, has called on all administrative bodies, officials and citizens of Russia to honour the Constitution, observe the laws and the federative treaty. Buryat parliament members have supported President Yeltsin's proposal to hold a referendum on confidence in the president on strictly constitutional principles.

Samara. The minor council of the Samara regional Soviet of People's Deputies has passed a decision on the need to hold a referendum on confidence in the president and to the Congress of People's Deputies. The Samara people's deputies move to hold a referendum on the main principle of a new constitution not earlier than in the third quarter of this year.

Partizansk (the maritime territory of the Russian Far East). Eight thousand Partizansk miners have come out in support of President Yeltsin's idea to hold a nation-wide referendum on April 25 to determine the measure of the people's confidence in the governing bodies of the Russian Federation. According to Vasiliy Kulikov, assistant head of the Partizansk Administration, miners' representatives today informed a meeting of the managers of the town's major enterprises about their decision.

Novosibirsk. "President Yeltsin is courageously and honestly asking the people to say whether they trust him or not. Thereby, he is discharging his pledge to defend the Constitution," says a statement released today by the president's representative in Novosibirsk region Anatoliy Monokhin. In his opinion, those who accuse the president of trying to stage a coup d'etat, to violate the Constitution, are afraid of the people and do not want to allow them to settle the power crisis themselves.

Khabarovsk. The minor territorial council of people's deputies has today called on the people of Khabarovsk territory, the Russian Far East, to observe law and order. The council reaffirmed its dedication to the Russian Constitution and to the principles of democracy. The address stresses that the council comes out against dictatorial designs, no matter from where they emanate.

Moscow TV Regional Coverage Noted

LD2303112293

[Editorial Report] Moscow Ostankino Television First Channel Network in Russian at 0900 GMT on 23 March, in its "Novosti" newscast, carries a 4-minute report on reaction from various Russian regions to Russian President Boris Yeltsin's address to the people.

From Krasnodar Kray, correspondent Vladimir Obraztsov reports that the only visible reaction to President Yeltsin's address is that the local "Support the President" public committee is busier. An unidentified woman tells Obraztsov that all such committees in the area immediately started preparing for the referendum and campaigning for a high turnout. In the future, she says, they plan to provide the organizational framework for multiparty elections.

The local authorities are at best ambivalent, Obraztsov continues. The inner soviet supports the Supreme Soviet, and the head of the kray's executive administration, Nikolay Yegorov, is quoted by Obraztsov as saying, "the president is entitled to turn to the people, but there are no grounds for discussion since the documents are not yet available, and there is no reason to drag the people of the Kuban into Moscow's fight."

From Chelyabinsk, correspondent Sergey Sergeyev reports that life is continuing as usual: the streets are calm, and factories are working. There was, however, a pro-communist rally in the town center on 22 March, and pro-Soviet leaflets have been distributed. The inner soviet has been in session, Sergeyev says, with most of its members criticizing President Yeltsin's move as precipitous and potentially dangerous. The video shows P.I. Sumin, identified by caption as the chairman of the Chelyabinsk oblast soviet, who says, "the Constitution and laws of the Russian federation will apply throughout Chelyabinsk oblast, and there will be no special rule whatsoever."

The head of the Chelyabinsk oblast executive administration, Vladimir Solovyev, however, tells Sergeyev that "the people of Russia have a legitimately-elected president. He is in power and is acting within the confines of the Constitution, even though that Constitution is a leftover from Brezhnev's times. I fully support the president's address and everything said in it and, to the depths of my soul, share the concern that was expressed in it."

From Daghestan, correspondent Dekabr Beybutov reports that public opinion is undecided, which is reflected in a joint statement issued to the press by the republic's government and Supreme Soviet. The video shows M.D. Omanov, identified by caption as the head of the Daghestan Supreme Soviet's legal department, who says that the Supreme Soviet Praesidium is closely following developments in Moscow and that it and the Council of Ministers have appealed to their federal counterparts to settle their differences through negotiation and in keeping with the Russian Federation Constitution. "The statement declares," he continues, "that bodies of state power and

government in the republic shall strictly abide by the Constitution of our republic, the Federation Treaty, and the Constitution of the Russian Federation. They will also act to maintain order and discipline."

North Caucasian Assembly Supports Yeltsin

OW2303112093 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1100 GMT 23 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The executive committee of the North Caucasian Peoples Assembly has pledged support to President Yeltsin. In an interview with Interfax, the assembly's general secretary reported that at its session on Monday [22 March] the executive committee had decided to "adopt measures in line with the address."

Set up in October 1992 as a regional organization, the assembly aims at stabilizing the situation in North Caucasus by solving the problem of economic integration in the region.

Adygeia Leadership Urges Compromise

OW2303114393 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1100 GMT 23 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] In an appeal adopted on Monday [22 March], the Presidium of the Parliament of Adygeia (a north-Caucasian republic within the RF [Russian Federation]) calls on the President and Parliament of Russia to find a compromise solution to the conflict in the top echelons of power.

Also on Monday, the republic's president Aslan Jarimov in his address to the population voiced concern over political events in the center, stressing that there is no confrontation either within the branches of power or between them and the population in Adygeia today.

On the same day, the President's administrations adopted a decision, according to which all instructions from the center would be scrutinized by the republican authorities to maintain order in the republic.

Supreme Soviet

'Routine Session' of Presidium Meets 22 Mar

LD2203182193 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1642 GMT 22 Mar 93

[Text] Moscow, 22 March (ITAR-TASS)—In Russia's House of Soviets today there was a routine session of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation, conducted by Ruslan Khasbulatov.

The Presidium discussed the bill "On making an amendment to Article 176 of the constitution of the Russian Federation." The proposed amendment envisages expansion of the powers of the procurator general of the Russian Federation in exercising supervision over the work of bringing government resolutions of a statutory and legal nature into line with the laws of the Russian Federation.

The session debated the draft resolutions of the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation "On some questions connected with the application of the law of the Russian Federation 'On the status of judges in the Russian Federation', and 'On the ratification of the provision on qualification collegia of judges and the provision on the qualification certificate of judges.'" In particular, the procedure for award of qualification status of judges and determination of periods for which it is valid are being regulated.

The Presidium examined the draft resolution of the Supreme Soviet and Council of Ministers of the Russian Federation "On state support for the functioning and development of the spa-town of Sochi." It is proposed acknowledging Sochi as a spa of federal significance along with grant of rights of recreational-style free economic zone.

All these documents have been sent for ruling to the standing commissions of the chambers, the committees of the Supreme Soviet, the president, the government of the Russian Federation, and to other subjects of legislative initiative.

The Presidiun of the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation discussed the question of the socioeconomic situation in the Jewish autonomous oblast. The crisis there has been aggravated by natural disasters damage, which have caused damage amounting to 500 million rubles. Discussion of the question has been carried over for the next session of the Presidium.

Proceeding from the 12 February 1993 resolution of the Constitutional Court of the Russian Federation "On measures to protect the the constitutional structure of the Russian Federation" regarding the verifying of the constitutionality of the decree of the president of the Russian Federation of 28 October 1992, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation resolved to speed up the elaboration of a bill "On public associations." This bill envisages determining the accountability of initiators for violations of the norms of the constitution and other laws of the Russian Federation in the establishment of public associations.

The Presidium also discussed other questions.

Overturns North Ossetian Resolution

OW2203182193 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1734 GMT 22 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Presidium of the Russian Supreme Soviet approved on Monday [22 March] a draft of a resolution establishing that the March 6 resolution from the North Ossetian parliament "On Recognition of the Republic of South Ossetia" is not legally effective.

Nikolay Medvyedev, chairman of the parliamentary Commission on National and State Structure and Nationality

Relations, said that recognizing sovereign states is the work of federal organs of power.

A resolution was adopted at the session to form a new Supreme Soviet department - on federation affairs and ethnic relations - which will be headed by Medvyedev. He told Interfax that the department's function will be similar to the functions of the State Committee on Federal and Nationality Affairs.

By taking the post, Medvyedev will become a member of a permanent deputy commission and a member of the Presidium of the Russian Supreme Soviet.

The presidium also considered issues concerning the establishment of the television and radio broadcasting channel RTV-Parliament based on a decision from the 7th Congress of People's Deputies. According to the Supreme Soviet's plan of work, the issue of parliamentary television will be brought up for consideration by parliament on Wednesday, March 24. Parliament Speaker Ruslan Khasbulatov stressed during a discussion of the issue that he views the formation of such a television channel as the only way to protect "the people of the country [from] lie which has befallen them." The resolution that the presidium passed stipulates that, beginning in March, 1993, the All-Russian State Television Company give the Russian Supreme Soviet air time on television and radio channels within the limits indicated on the amount of broadcasting in 1993. The Council of the Republic's Commission on Budget, Planning, and Taxation has been instructed to stipulate in the 1993 republican budget draft the allocation of $1.8 Mn [million] (without a ruble equivalent) plus 400 Mn rubles to fund Supreme Soviet television and radio programming.

Regional Affairs

Ingush President Urges Russian Troop Withdrawal

LD2203183593 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1719 GMT 22 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Mikhail Shevtsov]

[Text] Nazran March 22 TASS—"Regrettably, the Russian Army does not enjoy authority in the eyes of the significant part of the Ingush Republic's people. I am compelled to consider this fact," President Ruslan Aushev of Ingushetia told ITAR-TASS today.

He regards as one of the key reasons behind this situation the lack of discipline, disrespect for local customs and the unclear notion of their functions in conditions of the state of emergency. "I do not see Russian troops playing their role in stabilising the situation," Aushev noted. In this regard, Aushev intends to press for the withdrawal of Russian troops from the republic after the state of emergency expires on March 31, 1993.

Aushev thinks it is sufficient to set up a battalion of Interior Ministry troops to control the situaiton in the Ingush Republic. This battalion would be partially staffed by persons of the Ingush nationality and be subordinate to the republican president.

Chechen Official Urges Moscow To End 'Psychological War'

OW2303114693 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1100 GMT 23 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Chechen Foreign Minister Shamseddin Yussef sent an open letter to his Russian counterpart, Andrey Kozyrev, which urges Russia to end the "anti-Chechen psychological war which has assumed an international scale and which pictures the Chechens as the focus of all evil in the world."

The logic of the latest developments prompts the need of rapprochement," he stated.

He also complained that all of the letters, proposals and statements which the Chechen Foreign Ministry had sent to the Russian Foreign Ministry and personally to Andrey Kozyrev, and which are aimed at establishing a dialogue between the two ministries, have remained without a response.

Petropavlovsk Deputy Views Government Struggles

OW2303042993 Vladivostok Radiostantsiya Tikhiy Okean Maritime Network in Russian 0815 GMT 9 Mar 93

[From the "Pacific Ocean" program]

[Text] The 8th session of the Oblast Soviet, held in Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskiy, heard reports on the work of the city administration in 1992, and the forecast for special economic development for the current year. Vyacheslav Goncharov, deputy of the City Soviet talks about the session to Vladimir Kuchin, our Kamchatka correspondent:

[Begin recording] [Goncharov] In contrast to the two previous sessions, the 8th session of our City Soviet has come together to discuss very important issues in the life of the city, specifically, essentials like heating, power, schools, hospitals, clinics, the social protection of workers, support for pensioners, invalids, and so on; one could enumerate all the sore points which are being suffered today.

If you want to know my opinion as a deputy, and whether I am satisfied or not with the activities of our city administration in the past year, then, of course, I have a point of view. I do not consider that the administration has worked very productively. Without going into details, but simply giving a deputy's observation from the sidelines, I have noticed for instance that, practically no single task planned last year has been carried out. For instance, let us take the acute problem of housing construction: Not even 50 percent of the housing program has been completed, though the construction industry has not quite disintegrated. That

means that the population has not received the long-awaited apartments. The biggest problem of all now is how to activate the powerful construction industry which just three years ago used to complete and provide 200,000 to 220,000 square meters of housing [period not specified]; whereas, now we talk about 30,000 or 40,000 and consider this an achievement.

When speaking about the huge amount of transported cargo that used to take place in our city, today, our truck convoys are without work. I am looking out of the City Soviet building window at the berths in the port, and honestly, I get a feeling of foreboding. Today, there is not one vessel at berth—at this time they are usually delivering essential cargo like fertilizer, fuel, coal, food, or equipment for the agricultural economy to the city. Of course, all these problems cannot help but worry us. And so, we consider that the forecast for the future development of the city should first of all proceed from realistic possibilities; and it seems, from administration efforts to direct what can be achieved today, so as not to allow the life of the city to come to a standstill. That is the main thing. It would appear that we will be discussing these pointed issues at the session.

[Kuchin] Do you still harbor hope for the soviets in this situation, when there are all the signs that the corps of deputies is already incapable of—we will be honest and open—in some way influencing the work of our executive bodies when there is a bifurcation of opinion, starting with the president and the Supreme Soviet, down to your City Soviet?

[Goncharov] Generally speaking, the deputies' session and the Malyy Soviet—whom the session has charged with deciding concrete and vital matters—have tried to work together in coordinating work in matters and issues connected with vital provisions for the city, although there were arguments and conflict. If we speak about the structures of authority in general—this is in answer to your question as to whether the soviets are needed at all—my position on this score is such: The opposition between the legislative and the executive authorities is made...[changes thought] what opposition could there be between these two levels of authority if the legislator determines the level of competency of the executive authority, then the executive authority must function at that level of competency which the legislative authority has set. In our case, if one examines the processes that are going on at the top— if you remember that two or three years ago, I was a full time correspondent and took part in the work of many congresses, former party forums, and national union congresses; I was even at the first congress of peoples deputies of the Russian Federation precisely on the day when the declaration of Russia's sovereignty was adopted; and I remember these events—even at that time, at the first congress of peoples deputies of our republic, it was declared that the soviets as the representatives of the people are needed; and it was important to distribute the priorities, to correctly position all levels of authority, the legislative, the executive, and the judicial.

Although, in recent times the executive branch...[changes thought] this was particularly noticeable after the events of August 1991. The legislative authority considering the deed done, that is, after the soviet as the representative authority of the people had assisted certain political powers to come to power, it decided that now the people no longer needed the representative authority, and that the one authority which adopted and executed the law was quite sufficient. That is, a certain form of direct government, I won't call it an autocracy, but a presidential government, a government by one person, and that is what is being examined now. This is where the conflict lies, it seems to me.

[Kuchin] From my side it would be a straightforward lie if I did not inform our radio listeners of how the Oblast session really went. Perhaps for the first time during this congress, the Malyy Soviet and Aleksandr Vokarin, chairman of the Soviet, decided to show their teeth figuratively speaking, in respect to certain actions and decisions taken by the administration headed by Aleksandr Dudnikov. The representatives of the elected authority have discovered some breaches of the Russian Federation Law on Local Self Government. The deputies are pointing out the disregard of various decisions taken by the Soviet to the administration. In their view there are elements of presumption, negligence, or even straightforward disrespect of the city's representative body. It is not by accident that the battle lasted three days. In my view, chairman Aleksandr Vokarin conducted himself consistently, if not courageously—not like the example set by the Kamchatka Oblast authority bodies, where a bonding of spirits on all issues has occurred between the leaders of the soviet and the administration, including endless joint overseas trips. You will only find out about the final results of the session from discussions with the soviet chairman and the city mayor, if of course they agree to appear before the Tikhiy Okean [Pacific Ocean] listening audience. [end recording]

Komi Authorities Favor Observance of Constitution

OW2203182393 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1735 GMT 22 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Presidium of the Supreme Soviet and the government of the Republic of Komi (a republic within the Russian Federation located in Russia's north-west) believe that stabilization of economy but not re-distribution of authorities between different branches of power is the major task of this nation. In their statement adopted following the discussion of President Yeltsin's address to the people on March 20, the authorities of Komi advocate a strict observance of the Russian Constitution and Federative treaty, "as a part of it."

The Republic of Komi, the statement points out, maintains its normal working regime and the parliament will not convene an emergency session; the next session of the parliament will be held next week according to the schedule.

All-Tatar Congress Calls For Independence

OW1903223993 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1718 GMT 19 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The third congress (kurultai) of the All-Tatar Public Center was opened on Friday in Kazan. The representatives of the Tatar diaspora from different regions of Russia, CIS and Baltic states are participating in its work. The agenda of kurultai includes an account about its two-year work, discussion of the Center's new platform, and elections of the ruling organs.

Greeting the participants on behalf of Tatarstan's leadership, the deputy chairman of the republic's parliament Zilya Valeeva qualified the All-Tatar Public Center as "a mass popular movement which has a great political significance and influences the republic's power bodies." The Center's president Marat Mulyukov pointed out in his speech that after the 2nd kurultai held in February 1991 Tatarstan made "resolute steps" to obtain complete independence, namely, the republic elected the first president of this sovereign state and adopted a new Constitution.

According to Mulyukov, "on the eve of its disintegration Russia should acknowledge its guilt of Tatarstan's seizure in 1552 and be the first to recognize Tatarstan's complete independence." The leader of the All-Tatar Public Center declared that the world community should know that "the Tatars are struggling for freedom and democracy, they have their own state and they strive to join the family of free peoples - the United Nations Organization." Mulyukov also called all organization of the Tatar national movement for unity and mutual understanding in order to consolidate the forces and to win at the future elections to the Supreme Soviet.

International Affairs

Ukraine Expresses Support for Yeltsin Actions

Kravchuk Issues Statement

OW2203174193 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1641 GMT 22 Mar 93

[Report by Andrey Pershin, Andrey Petrovskiy, Vladimir Shishlin, and Boris Grishchenko; from the "Presidential Bulletin" feature; item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk has made a statement on the present-day political crisis in Russia. Here is its full text as provided to us by his press secretary, Vladimir Shlyaposhnikov:

"The events currently taking place in the Russian Federation are causing serious concern among the people of Ukraine. In analyzing this new spell of political struggle in Russia, we take the position that the confrontation between the different branches of state authority must not check the implementation of the democratic reforms and have dramatic consequences.

"I resolutely support the reform policy of the Russian leadership and am convinced that it cannot be implemented without national conciliation. Ukraine will be giving active support to the democratic processes and economic reforms in Russia, and will be seeking to strengthen friendly and equal relations between the two peoples.

"The close historical links between the two fraternal peoples and their similar cultural traditions give us reasons to call on the conflicting parties to abandon their attempts to end the crisis by means of confrontation and use methods based on respect for authority. It cannot be tolerated that the President and the legislative branch, both elected by the whole people, should be seeking to deprive each other of some of their powers without consulting the people.

"We hope that the President, the upper echelons of the legislative branch, the Government, and all citizens of the Russian Federation will display courage and equanimity at this time of ordeal.

"We sincerely wish peace to the peoples of Russia."

Kravchuk Calls Yeltsin

LD2203205293 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1951 GMT 22 Mar 93

[Text] Kiev, 22 Mar (UKRINFORM-TASS)—According to a report by the Ukrainian president's press service, Leonid Kravchuk and Boris Yeltsin had a telephone conversation today.

The president of Ukraine expressed profound condolences to B. Yeltsin in connection with his great loss—the death of his mother, Claudia Yeltsin.

Leonid Kravchuk said that he supports the Russian president's efforts aimed at firmly implementing [tverdoye provedeniye] a course of democratic reforms.

Parliamentarians Support Yeltsin

OW2203213093 Moscow INTERFAX in English 2036 GMT 22 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Deputy chairman of the International affairs committee of the Ukrainian parliament Bogdan Gordyn thinks Russia's Supreme Council is falling behind in the democratization process and economic reforms occuring in the Republic.

In an interview given to the "Interfax" correspondent in connection with Boris Yeltsin's address to the nation he rendered the decision of the President as "the only possible and proper approach to the existing situation." The deputy assumes that Ukraine should support Yeltsin for "the victory of the conservative wing, headed by Khasbulatov promises no advantages to the neighboring states."

Support for Boris Yeltsin's political course was also expressed by the People's Deputy, leader of the influential party - Popular Rukh Vyacheslav Chernovil.

Rukh Urges Same Actions for Kravchuk

LD2203233193 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1900 GMT 22 Mar 93

[Text] Lyudmila Mavrina reported that the latest events in Moscow has caused anxiety in Ukraine.

[Mavrina] As usual, the first person to give an opinion of the events in Moscow was Vyacheslav Chernovil, leader of the opposition and chairman of the people's Rukh. In the statement published by the Rukh press it is stated: We believe that Russian President Boris Yeltsin has acted as he should have acted; there was no other way. It was necessary to use the most decisive measures to stop the Communist empire invasion that was being carried out by the last Congress of the Russian People's Deputies.

By the way, we would like to see our President Leonid Kravchuk taking the same decisive steps. Actually, the same thing is happening in the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet as is happening in Russia. The Communist forces have also raised their heads, and an attack is also being carried out on the government that is implementing reforms. The fact that Boris Yeltsin was not afraid to appeal directly to the people does him honor.

Christian Democrats Urge Support

LD2203210593 Kiev Radio Ukraine World Service in Ukrainian 1600 GMT 22 Mar 93

[Text] In our opinion, the process of establishing democracy in Russia, whose guarantor in particular is President Boris Yeltsin and his political adherents, deserves support. This is mentioned in a statement from the Christian Democratic Party of Ukraine on occasion of the events in

the Russia Federation. The Christian Democratic Party of Ukraine, stresses the document, cannot be indifferent to what is happening in our neighboring country, whose historic and economic ties are extremely important for our state.

For Ukraine, the forcing of President Yeltsin from power will mean not only a sharpening of the situation surrounding Crimea and Sevastopol, but will be a threat to its integrity as a whole, stresses the statement.

Democratic Party Supports Russian Democrats

LD2203183893 Kiev Radio Ukraine World Service in Ukrainian 1600 GMT 22 Mar 93

[Text] Political and civil figures, leaders of foremost parties, and movements of Ukraine are continuing to comment on events in Russia. Myroslav Popovych, leader of the Democratic Revival Party, stated that a struggle is taking place in Russia between supporters of the further development of democracy and supporters of a return to the communist regime. Popovych expressed support to all democratic forces of Russia having stressed that Boris Yeltsin's appeal to the people was the only way out in the given situation. Myroslav Popovych noted that in its time similar tendencies also came to a head in Ukraine. He expressed hope, however, that one will not have to resort to similar actions to defend democracy because, in his opinion, pro-communist forces in Ukraine have not gained such force as in Russia.

Kiev 'Counts On' UN Security Council Nuclear Guarantees

OW2203191193 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1855 GMT 22 Mar 93

[From the "Politics, Economy" section of the INTERFAX "Business Report"—item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Ukraine counts on receiving from U.N. Security Council member states more reliable nuclear security guarantees, as well as extra resources to compensate for spending on the liquidation, according to the START-1 treaty, of nuclear weapons.

Anatoliy Zlenko, the Ukrainian foreign minister, should, during his visit (starting March 23) to the U.S., report to Washington on the Ukrainian parliament's preparations to ratify the Soviet-U.S. treaty. Speaking Sunday [21 March] evening on republican television, Zlenko said most deputies were not satisfied with the $176 Mn [million] in U.S. aid, allocated to help the republic destroy its nuclear weapons.

Ukraine is the last republic in the former Soviet Union not to have ratified the 1991 Soviet-U.S. START-1 treaty.

Tarasyuk Discusses Relations With Russia

AU1903152893 Krakow TYGODNIK POWSZECHNY in Polish 14 Mar 93 p 5

[Interview with Borys Tarasyuk, Ukrainian deputy minister of foreign affairs, by Andrzej Romanowski in Krakow on 19 February: "We Are Not Bartering Our Own Territory"]

[Text] [Romanowski] At the Polish-Ukrainian conference titled "New Challenges, New Responsibilities," you said that Ukraine does not consider the present Russia to be the heir to the Soviet empire. Other statements by Ukrainian officials have expressed the opposite view.

[Tarasyuk] I did not indulge in deliberations on whether Russia is a continuation of Soviet imperialism. I merely spoke about the problem of legal continuity. I recalled our long-standing view that we have never considered Russia a continuation of the USSR. We have always thought that all countries emerging from the disintegration of the Union are all equal successors to that empire, and none of them can claim to be the sole successor. There are only two exceptions to that rule, and both of them concern Russia. The first is Russia's right to take the place of the USSR within the United Nations and Security Council as a permanent member. All the post-USSR states agreed to this, and, I hasten to add, they did so willingly. The second exception is the joint agreement of the CIS member-states, suggested by Ukraine, that Russia take the place of the USSR as a signatory of the nuclear arms non-proliferation treaty. These are the only exceptions to which all the post-Soviet countries have agreed. By claiming to be the sole legal continuation of the former empire, Russia wants to prove its entitlement to all USSR assets. Ukraine will never agree to that.

[Romanowski] Is that the only source of Ukrainian-Russian antagonism? Even those Russian democrats with the greatest support for Ukrainian-Russian rapprochement are complaining about Ukrainian "aggravation" and countering it with patience.

[Tarasyuk] I categorically reject such an interpretation. It is, to put it mildly, not true. Why should the Russians be suffering because of us? Can they complain about injustices regarding former Soviet property outside the country? We can. Has Ukraine usurped USSR foreign assets or the USSR foreign information infrastructure? Is it Ukrainian officials who are expressing doubts about Russia's territorial integrity and questioning the Ukrainian- Russian border?

[Romanowski] No Russian official representatives have expressed such views.

[Tarasyuk] Who do you consider to be Russian official representatives? Parliamentary deputies?

[Romanowski] No. Only authorized representatives of the executive can be considered as such.

[Tarasyuk] Well then, such opinions have been expressed. But I also want to ask: Is it the Ukrainian parliament that

spoke out on the subject of the status of cities on Russian territory? That is exactly what the Russian parliament did concerning Sevastopol, which is on Ukrainian territory. For instance, on 25 December Mr. Pudovkin, chairman of a so-called working group within the Russian Supreme Council appointed to settle the status of Sevastopol, distributed among the deputies of the Crimean parliament and the residents of Crimea a bulletin containing openly provocative ideas constituting interference in the domestic affairs of Ukraine and attacking Ukraine's territorial integrity. Would the Russians be so patient if something like that happened in their territory? Is a great nation entitled to everything, even lawlessness?

[Romanowski] The Russians very much regret the loss of Crimea. They say the Crimean people should determine their own fate. What would Ukraine do if the Crimean parliament were to approve Crimea's secession from Ukraine and its independence?

[Tarasyuk] Well, no country has guarantees that it will never lose a bit of its territory, but one of the reasons for signing the CSCE treaty in 1975 was to guarantee the inviolability of existing borders. So when Ukraine appeared as an independent country and achieved international recognition, it did so as a real entity within real borders.

[Romanowski] I do not think that is so obvious. It was the Soviet Union that signed the CSCE, and it was difficult to say anything about borders between Soviet republics because these were internal USSR divisions.

[Tarasyuk] What are "internal divisions?" The view that there are some sort of internal or external borders is an erroneous one.

[Romanowski] Let us try to use an analogy. Russia's borders were also confirmed by the CSCE, even if they were "internal" ones. Yet Russia granted sovereignty to Tatarstan, an autonomous republic in the very center of the country, surrounded on all sides by Russian territory. I asked you about Crimea, because I wanted to know the Ukrainian intentions in a situation similar to Tatarstan.

[Tarasyuk] That is a completely hypothetical situation. We will see if Russia agrees in the long run to the existence of a completely independent Tatarstan. Today I want to make it clear that Ukrainian territory cannot be an object of barter.

[Romanowski] What is Ukraine's attitude toward the CIS? President Kravchuk was one of its founders, yet later he dissociated himself with it on several occasions. At the recent "summit" in Minsk on 22 January, Ukraine refused to sign the CIS statute, but chose to remain within it all the same. What do you expect of the CIS? One has the impression that Ukraine needs it all the time.

[Tarasyuk] It is not true that Ukraine has declared that it does not need the CIS. All we have said is that the CIS is an organization that is meant to make the disintegration of the USSR less painful, and I must say that in this regard, the CIS has proved its worth. A few issues still remain, but they concern almost nothing but Ukrainian-Russian relations. CIS has not however, fulfilled expectations concerning economic cooperation between the ex-USSR republics, yet that is the cooperation in which Ukraine and other republics were the most interested.

[Romanowski] Instead of that, two blocs have formed within CIS; one centered on Russia, and one centered, to a certain extent, on Ukraine. I have in mind the Kiev-Chisinau-Ashgabat axis. Does Ukraine really want to be the leader of this second bloc?

[Tarasyuk] One should add Azerbaijan to these three countries. Ukraine, Moldova, and Turkmenistan did not sign the CIS statute in Minsk, where the Azerbaijani parliament completely refused to ratify the CIS treaty and that country is completely outside the CIS.

[Romanowski] You have not answered my question.

[Tarasyuk] At this stage we do not rule out a variocentric CIS, so to speak. Various internal agreements will be concluded in order to resolve some specific business, but we should all have the possibility of existing within the CIS framework. You must remember that Ukraine supported the CIS and approached the CIS idea in a constructive manner. It is at the Minsk "summit" that President Kravchuk suggested the adoption of two documents; one on the principles governing mutual relations between the CIS member-states, and one on the principles of economic cooperation. Likewise, it was on our president's initiative that all the CIS presidents signed the cooperation agreement, irrespective of whether they had previously signed the CIS statute. In any case, there is no difference today between those countries that signed the statute and those that did not. As for the statute, I promise you, as someone who has carefully analyzed this document from a legal angle, that it contains many discrepancies. For example, Chapter Seven, dealing with membership, envisions a future legal clash between CIS founder-members (such as Ukraine), and countries associated with the CIS. Please bear in mind that we are frequently accused of dismembering the CIS, yet who is pushing whom out of CIS? Is Ukraine pulling out, or, as is more likely, is Ukraine's CIS membership inconvenient to someone, because that party does not want Ukrainian interests to automatically become CIS interests?

[Romanowski] That must be the answer to my question. Nevertheless, differences within the CIS are well-known. They also concern the very delicate issue of nuclear weapons. Right now, international opinion is aimed against Ukraine because of its opposition to the START treaty. You are asking for international safety guarantees first...

[Tarasyuk] We have to have such guarantees from the permanent members of the Security Council and from the nuclear countries. The member countries of the Security Council bear particular responsibility for the maintenance of international peace.

[Romanowski] Only Russia has offered you such guarantees, and no one else.

[Tarasyuk] Yes and no. Notice that Ukraine wishes to dispose of the nuclear weapons on its territory. Yet it has every right to retain them. In any case, it also has the right to expect its security to be guaranteed and that it will not be a victim of aggression with or without the use of nuclear weapons. We have the right to expect the permanent members of the Security Council to recognize Ukraine's territorial integrity and the inviolability of its borders. So far, four out of the five nuclear countries, the United States, Great Britain, Russia, and France, have stated their readiness to offer us such guarantees. As to the scope of these guarantees, they differ in only one respect. The unofficial text conveyed to us by Russia is the guarantee that we like the least.

[Romanowski] Why?

[Tarasyuk] I do not want to go into details for the time being, because talks are still under way, and because we hope that the existing misunderstandings will be cleared up.

[Romanowski] We have not said anything about Ukrainian-Polish relations yet. What are your expectations here?

[Tarasyuk] We are still troubled by economic problems. Not everything has been fully utilized yet, and the process of introducing economic reforms in Ukraine has become protracted. But our mutual relations contain a rich potential and enormous possibilities. Poland and Ukraine may become, so to speak, the nucleus of stability and security in central-eastern Europe.

Iranian Official Promises Oil Deliveries To Start Soon

AU1903173593 Kiev HOLOS UKRAYINY in Ukrainian 18 Mar 93 pp 1, 3

[Interview with Mahmud Va'ezi, deputy minister of foreign affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran, by Serhiy Danylenko; in Kiev; date not given: "There Are No 'Ifs' on Our Part"]

[Text] Recently, a delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran headed by Mahmud Va'ezi, deputy minister of foreign affairs, was in Kiev on an official visit. After the meeting with Ukraine President Leonid Kravchuk, the guest agreed to answer several questions especially for HOLOS UKRAYINY readers.

[Danylenko] Mr. Va'ezi, was your visit to Ukraine planned beforehand or it is perhaps due to the fact that some of the joint agreements are not working?

[Va'ezi] The development of our relations, which were initiated by President Kravchuk's visit to Teheran, requires new meetings to coordinate action to make our mutual relations more fruitful. This time, too, our delegation has had meetings with numerous Ukrainian representatives who are engaged in various areas of state activity. We discussed questions of international policy (the situation on the Asian continent and in western and eastern Europe) and bilateral economic cooperation. In particular, we discussed possibilities of speeding up the implementation of the accords on supplying Iranian oil to Ukraine. In addition to that, next month, our states must sign agreements on cooperation on such important matters of the national economy as land, sea, and air transport. It will not be long before an Iranian bank opens a branch in Kiev to facilitate mutual settlements.

[Danylenko] Returning to the question of oil deliveries, it would be interesting to learn when, in your opinion, these raw materials will start coming to Ukraine.

[Va'ezi] This depends upon the Ukrainian side. There are no "ifs" on our part. As soon as Ukraine is ready to receive the cargo, the deliveries will start. Besides, Iran has granted credit totalling $30 million to enable your country to purchase the first batch of these raw materials.

[Danylenko] As is known, Iranian diplomacy is among the most influential in the Middle and Near East. Could the Iranian leadership help return to their fatherland those Ukrainian citizens who are held prisoner in Afghanistan?

[Va'ezi] This question was also touched upon during the negotiations. I assured the leadership of your state that Iran will make every effort to return the prisoners. We will hold negotiations with the leaders of those Afghan groups that are detaining Ukraine citizens. We have a complete list of prisoners who are presently in Afghanistan.

[Danylenko] Thank you for the conversation.

National Affairs

Odessa District Command Begins Military Exercises

LD2203194593 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1901 GMT 22 Mar 93

[Text] Kiev, 22 Mar (UKRINFORM-TASS)—The Ukrainian Defense Ministry press service has reported that the Odessa military district command and staff began exercises today. The staff of the district formations and units and subunits of Ukraine's National Guard, border troops, and marines are participating in the exercise. The exercise is being held in accordance with a plan for combat training of Ukraine's Armed Forces. For several days, interaction and command [vzaimodeystviye I upravleniye] will be perfected. The movement of troops and military hardware from their permanent stations is not planned.

Parliament Approves Basic Aspects of Foreign Policy

OW1903131393 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1147 GMT 19 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] During a closed session on Thursday [18 March], the Ukrainian Parliament approved in the first reading the basic aspects of Ukraine's foreign policy. Priority was

given to "the development of an influential and independent state, capable of guaranteeing the population's well-being and of becoming a guarantor of European security".

The Ukrainian Parliament's draft resolution on the issue was sent for finalization to the Cabinet and the parliamentary commissions.

At the end of the session, Ukrainian Foreign Minister Anatoliy Zlenko, who presented this document in parliament, expressed satisfaction with the results of the discussion. He also said that the Foreign Ministry would take the deputies' recommendations into account.

Meanwhile, Deputy Sergey Golovaty, who is a leader of the RUKH movement, criticized Zlenko's report. He believes that the document was approved only because some of the deputies voted for their absent colleagues.

In his opinion, in a civilized state, the parliament's "foreign-policy activity should be limited to interparliamentary contacts and control over the implementation of the foreign policy by the government. The drafting of the "basic aspects of foreign policy" is a vestige of the communist past, he said. [quotation marks as received]

Zlenko on Foreign Policy Principles

OW2103123393 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1637 GMT 20 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Ukrainian Foreign Minister Anatoliy Zlenko declared at a press conference on Saturday [20 March] in Kiev, which was devoted to a closed discussion of the concept of the republic's foreign policy by the Ukrainian parliament on March 18, that the concept of Ukraine's foreign policy is well balanced and takes into consideration interests of Ukraine and its partners in the East and in the West.

According to Zlenko, the parliament predominantly discussed 2 issues: the attitude to the CIS and Ukraine's non-nuclear status. The Minister noted that the Republic's foreign policy should be aimed at the development of Ukraine as an independent democratic state, ensuring stability of international situation, preserving of territorial integrity, and expanding economic cooperation with foreign countries.

Zlenko said that Ukraine will pursue its foreign policy in the framework of bilateral agreements, European regional cooperation, cooperation within the CIS, and participation in the United Nations Organization and other international organizations.

Establishiing its bilateral relations, Ukraine will give priority to the relations with the contiguous and other western states and with the countries of the Asian-Pacific region, African, and Latin American countries. Zlenko emphasized Ukraine's relations with Russia which should enjoy priority, he said.

He underlined that Ukraine and Russia will determine their relations in accordance with the treaty signed in 1991.

Ukraine's approach towards foreign policy does not contain any principal changes. He said that the Commonwealth is a civilized form to develop integration processes assisting in stabilization of economic situation. Zlenko stressed that Ukraine sees the future of the CIS in creation of a dynamic and flexible mechanism of negotiations, consultations, and contacts in order to build a new form of economic cooperation.

Ukraine should sign the START-1 Treaty, Zlenko said. But it can separately sign this treaty and the treaty on nonproliferation of nuclear weapons so as to ensure the guarantees of its security.

Ukraine's Foreign Minister said that the republic has not signed the CIS Treaty on collective security due to the fact that currently it is necessary to speak about collective security of all European countries, the Minister emphasized. "Ukraine views itself not only as a member of the CIS but as a European state as well," he declared.

Further on Zlenko Comments

LD2003221793 Kiev Ukrayinske Telebachennya Network in Ukrainian 1700 GMT 20 Mar 93

[Text] The issue of the main trends of Ukrainian foreign policy was discussed at a plenary session of the Supreme Council of Ukraine that was held behind closed doors on 18 March.

Today, Ukrainian Foreign Affairs Minister Anatoliy Zlenko held a briefing for journalists on the results of the discussion of this issue in parliament:

[Begin correspondent Natalya Kondratyu recording] Twenty-five people's deputies took part in a debate at the Supreme Council session following a report by the minister of foreign affairs.

The report and speeches determined that the tasks were to gradually establish Ukraine as an influential European state and logically return Ukraine to the European Community as a country capable of ensuring the people's well-being and able to play the part of one of the real guarantors of stability in Europe. This was stressed at the news conference.

Zlenko noted that the foreign policy of Ukraine was being implemented in four main areas. These are: bilateral relations, European regional cooperation, cooperation within the framework of the CIS, and participation in the United Nations and other international organizations.

Incidentally, the issue of compensating Ukraine for the losses that it incurred as a result of the UN sanctions against Yugoslavia would be raised during a U.S. visit, the minister said.

The briefing discussed the ratification of the START-1 Treaty and cooperation between CIS countries and European states.

Journalists were interested in the need to properly provide the foreign policy of Ukraine with corresponding material resources, because (?there was) a problem with that.

Zlenko also said that the Supreme Council had passed a draft of the main trends of the foreign policy of Ukraine in the first reading. The Supreme Council also instructed its permanent commissions and the Cabinet of Ministers to do additional work on this document and submit it for the session's consideration. [end recording]

Zlenko on Border 'Inviolability'

LD2103145593 Kiev Radio Ukraine World Service in Ukrainian 0600 GMT 21 Mar 93

[Text] One of the priority directions in the foreign policy of Ukraine is the activity as regards guaranteeing its territorial integrity and the inviolability of its borders. This was stated yesterday by Anatoliy Zlenko, minister of foreign affairs of Ukraine at a news conference. He stressed that in the first place relations with our immediate neighbours are built on this basis. In doing so the external political department of Ukraine is guided by the international practice. In interstate political documents, the minister stressed, clauses on mutual recognition of the present borders, and on the absence of claims to each other as regards changing them are always included. In particular, such agreements are being prepared for signing by Slovakia and Moldova.

Crimean Parliament Debates Election Bills

MK2003101193 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 19 Mar 93 p 3

[Aleksandr Pilat report: "Deported Peoples—a Stumbling Block? Crimean Supreme Soviet Holds Hearing"]

[Text] The Crimean Supreme Soviet's first hearing took place on 17 March. It was held in advance of the discussion at the session of the Crimean parliament, which is due to open on 24 March, of three draft laws: "On Citizens' Associations," "On Presidential Elections," and "On Elections to the Crimean Supreme Soviet." Leaders of registered parties and movements, ethnic-cultural societies, and scientists and lawyers were invited to the hearings. Crimean Supreme Soviet Chairman Nikolay Bagrov said that the aforementioned draft laws are open to debate.

The reporters—Yevgeniy Skisov, chief of the Crimean Council of Ministers' justice department, and Ivan Polyakov, member of the Supreme Soviet presidium—were asked many questions. In particular, Sergey Shuvaynikov, people's deputy and chairman of the Crimean Russian Party, wanted to know whether a party could be registered if its proclaimed goal was "peaceful reunification of the Crimean Republic with Russia." Skisov said that this kind of party could not be legalized since the Constitution of the Crimean Republic says: "The Crimean Republic is a democratic and secular state within Ukraine." Many of those present, however, were not satisfied with that answer. People's Deputy Andrey Menyaylov said: "In the civilized world there are no bans on ideas—it would be absurd for us to have it here. The fact that this problem is still unresolved contributes to tensions on the peninsula. We are raising the question of uniting with Russia, and I propose that the question be raised in even broader terms—the unification of the Slavic peoples, including Crimea, in one federal or confederal state." Deputy Menyaylov suggested in this connection that amendments be urgently introduced into Crimea's Constitution.

The draft law on elections to the Crimean Supreme Soviet provides for the organization to that end of 32 single-seat electoral districts, one multi-seat district, and seven ethnic districts. In the multi-seat constituency 28 deputies are to be elected. Elections in ethnic and single-seat districts will produce for the Crimean parliament 14 deputies from the Crimean Tatars constituency and one deputy each from the Armenian, Bulgarian, Greek, Karaim, Krymchat, and German districts. Thus, under the new draft law, the Crimean Supreme Soviet will comprise 80 deputies.

A sharp discussion ensued concerning the quotas for representatives of deported peoples. A representative of the Crimean Union of Communists said: "We, being internationalists, believe and are convinced that it is wrong to divide the people on ethnic lines." He was supported by People's Deputy Yuriy Meshkov, chairman of the Crimean Republican Movement. In response, Yuriy Osmanov, representative of the Ethnic Movement of Crimean Tatars, stated: "You are thinking in terms of 1944." Crimean Civic Forum Chairman Vladislav Khmelovskiy suggested that the law should provide that the "quota will be retained only until the deported peoples have all returned to the Crimea."

Summing up the debate, Nikolay Bagrov observed that many questions remain unresolved. On the basis of the results of this discussion, Crimean Supreme Soviet commissions, in conjunction with lawyers, will once again analyze everything and after additions and amendments have been introduced, the Crimean parliament will consider the bill.

National Salvation Front Spurns Crimean Ukrainian Congress

MK2003102493 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 19 Mar 93 p 3

[Aleksandr Pilat "Crimea" report under the general heading "Congress of Sevastopol's Ukrainians To Take Place in Late March. National Salvation Front Protests Against It"]

[Text] Aleksandr Kruglov, people's deputy of Crimea and the Sevastopol City Soviet and also chairman of the Sevastopol committee of the National Salvation Front, hurled threats at congress members in Crimean newspapers, demanding on behalf of the National Salvation Front that the city authorities prevent the congress from taking place.

In an interview for NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA, A. Kruglov said that unless the city authorities make appropriate

decisions to that effect, Sevastopol patriots would surround the building on the eve of the congress and would not let a single participant in. "I will not dissuade the Sevastopol people who want to tear to pieces the building where the congress is to take place. Were I not a deputy, I would take part in these actions myself," the National Salvation Front committee chairman said.

On 17 March, the organizing committee for holding the congress of Sevastopol's Ukrainians distributed a statement calling on Crimea's various political forces not to stir up passions around the upcoming forum. The organizing committee's document dismisses rumors that members of the Ukrainian National Self-Defense may attend the congress. The statement also points out that the forthcoming congress will not require any outside "protection" or "help," hence any visits to Sevastopol by political, paramilitary, or Cossack groups will only tarnish the congress' ideas.

"We are striving for dialogue with all the political forces of Sevastopol, including the branches of the Socialist Party and the Russian Party of Crimea [Russkaya Partiya Kryma]. Furthermore, agreement has already been reached that the congress will consider the matter of holding a Ukrainian-Russian friendship forum in Sevastopol," the statement of the organizing committee stresses.

Sevastopol Concerned Over Congress

MK2003102293 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 19 Mar 93 p 3

[Vladimir Skachko report under the general heading "Congress of Sevastopol's Ukrainians To Take Place in Late March. National Salvation Front Protests Against It"]

[Text] A Sevastopol City Soviet session has considered matters related to the forthcoming congress of Ukrainians in Sevastopol and some public organizations' plans to hold an alternative congress of the city's Russians on the same day.

Following the deliberations, an appeal was made saying that the purpose of the Ukrainians' congress—to seek ways of reaching interethnic accord and mutual confidence—did not raise any doubts. At the same time, the call for public associations, parties, and movements to consolidate along ethnic lines did not draw support from a significant section of the city's population. Some of Sevastopol's organizations and movements call for a retaliatory action—an alternative congress of the Russian patriotic movement—to be taken on that same day and at the same hour, and such confrontation under ethnic slogans gives rise to concern. The appeal calls on the congress' organizers to consider once again the possible negative results and refrain from holding the congress for the time being.

The city soviet session also demanded that the state authority bodies take all the requisite measures in order to avert the possible negative consequences of holding two ethnic congresses at one time.

The deputies called on the chiefs of the Black Sea Fleet and the Ukrainian Navy not to allow the Fleets' personnel to be drawn into a confrontation along ethnic lines.

If the appeal is not taken into consideration, the city soviet and local state administration chiefs intend to hold a roundtable meeting in the next few days with both congresses' organizers.

Belarus

Parliamentarians Comment on Situation in Russia

LD2303021293 Minsk Radio Minsk Network in Belarusian 1815 GMT 22 Mar 93

[Text] The events in Russia naturally cannot but be of concern here in Belarus too. It is clear for everyone that here too a lot depends on the way things turn out in the neighboring country. BELINFORM correspondents asked several Belarusian parliamentarians to assess the situation in Moscow. Please note: all of them emphasized that they do not interfere with the internal affairs of Russia and therefore speak as private individuals.

[Leanid Pryvalaw] However events develop, all should be equal before the law and the Constitution—both the president and ordinary citizens. I am for searching for a compromise however difficult it is. The Constitutional Court, I think, will sort everything out in Russia, but those guilty of worsening the situation must by all means be punished.

[Mikhail Slyamnyow] As for the future, life will put everything in its place itself. One thing is clear: the political and sociopolitical processes that are taking place in Russia are irreversible. One cannot turn back history. The revival of the USSR is also a utopia.

Here is the opinion of Lyavontiy Zdanevich: I am convinced that Boris Yeltsin did not have a different way out. In my opinion, at the Eighth Congress the Russian people's deputies did not want to take upon themselves the burden of responsibility and created a legal deadlock and in effect pushed the president of Russia toward the decision on the edge of the constitutional [word indistinct]. Comparing the situation in the two parliaments—Russia and Belarus—Zdanevich said: I see the majority of the deputies both here and there simply do not want to be tested by a referendum. They declare that they act on behalf of the people, but in fact they are very much afraid of the results of the referendum, understanding that in that event they will have to part with their places.

New Constitutional Draft Completed

OW2203215693 Moscow INTERFAX in English 2036 GMT 22 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The agenda of the next session of the Belarusian parliament will include debates on a constitutional draft, Vasil Shaladonov, Prosecutor General, said at a news conference in Minsk Monday [22 March]. The draft amended by the deputies would introduce the presidency.

The draft makes the president "the head of state and chief executive." Shelodonov said that the president would have "very broad" powers.

A citizen supported by at least 440 deputies or 25,000 citizens would have the right to run for presidency.

Shelodonov emphasized that the amended draft includes a clause on Control and Supervision by the Constitutional Court, Prosecutor's service, and the Supervision Chamber.

Prime Minister Meets Heads of Industrial Enterprises

LD1903233193 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1432 GMT 19 Mar 93

[By BELINFORM correspondent Viktor Sakhankov for TASS]

[Text] Minsk, 19 Mar—At a meeting of industrial enterprise heads with Vyacheslav Kebich, chairman of the Belarus Council of Ministers, which took place in Minsk on the evening of 18 March, the talk from the very outset took an untraditional direction. The tone was set by the prime minister himself who proposed that attention be focused on ideas for getting Belarus out of crisis. He noted that the government like all of society has for too long been following stereotypes in understanding the essence of interstate relations. As a result the accords with heads of CIS governments have not been operating in practice. High prices for energy resources have made our output uncompetitive, he said. One must not disregard either the fact that a course has been set by Moscow of developing its own more promising technologies and saturating our marketing with them.

The last meeting of CIS government heads showed that in the republics of the former USSR there are strong attitudes in favor of creating a close economic union, Vyacheslav Kebich noted. This view was supported too by Ukrainian Prime Minister Leonid Kuchma. To date, however, for a number of reasons it is possible seriously to count only on a union of three powers: Belarus, Russia, and Kazakhstan. It "ought to be tried out with a narrow membership," leaving the doors open for all the rest.

"We need an economic union," Vyacheslav Kebich emphasized, "without customs barriers and duties and with a unified ruble zone and monetary unit, in short, the economic and financial policy which indeed determines a real union."

Kebich on Economic Union Plan

OW1903204993 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1608 GMT 19 Mar 93

[By Andrey Pershin, Andrey Petrovskiy, Vladimir Shishlin, and Boris Grishchenko; from the "Presidential Bulletin" feature; item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The leaders of Belarus, Kazakhstan and Ukraine have different views on ways of shaping an economic union. Belarusian Prime Minister Vyacheslav Kebich told the directors of the biggest Belarusian industrial enterprises on March 18 that he had received telegrams from Boris Yeltsin and Nursultan Nazarbayev, suggesting that all of the CIS countries without exception should be admitted to the Economic Union. He also said that he

opposed such an idea and that in his opinion, the establishment of such a union should begin with the creation of an alliance between Belarus, Kazakhstan and Russia. Subsequently, this union might be joined by the remaining CIS countries on a voluntary basis, he added.

Boris Yeltsin's plan is good only from the political point of view, he continued. Such a union will hardly be viable, he added, because some of the CIS leaders, for instance, the leaders of Tajikistan, have their own idea of participation in the CIS. "What's the use of creating a second CIS?" asked Kebich. He believes that for political reasons Ukraine will not join the Economic Union immediately. This can be judged from Leonid Kuchma's statements during the recent talks between the prime ministers of Belarus, Kazakhstan, Russia and Ukraine, held shortly after the latest CIS summit in Moscow, he said. During the conference the parties involved reached an agreement on the establishment of an economic union, based on coordinated fiscal and customs policies. In addition, the union members might have one currency, one budget deficit, the same credit rates and interests, and a single emission center. Kebich said that a working group at a level not lower than that of vice-premiers would be set up soon to draft an agreement on the creation of the economic union.

To quote Kebich, the visit to Minsk by Speaker of the Russian Parliament Ruslan Khasbulatov was caused, by among other reasons, by Khasbulatov's proposal on the establishment of a bilateral Russian- Belarusian economic union. Kebich said that the constituent documents could not be signed without Kazakhstan's participation, because the leaders of Kazakhstan were among the initiators of the idea of the economic union

IF [INTERFAX] Note: The Belarusian parliament's spokesman, Vasiliy Vorobyov, said that during the talks with Khasbulatov on March 18, Stanislav Shushkevich stated that his republic did not see any alternative to the economic union with the Russian Federation. He also noted that a monetary, customs and economic union was vitally important at the current moment. He believes that instead of the bilateral clearing procedure, the two states should make more efficient use of the ruble in bilateral payments. He also urged Russia to broaden technical cooperation with Belarus in the military sphere, saying that defense industries figured prominently in the Belarusian economy.

Vyacheslav Kebich said that all the states willing to join the economic union must also join the CIS collective security agreement. This poses no threat to the policy of state neutrality, proclaimed by the Belarusian parliament, he continued. "Our republic's joining the system of collective security is economically linked with the defense industry," he said.

He also announced that the tactics of joining the economic union through parliament had been worked out already. Whereas the resolution on the establishment of the economic union may be approved by the parliament without any problems, the question of joining the collective security agreement may cause heated debates, so it would be expedient to discuss the idea of the economic union first, and then consider the possibility of joining the collective security agreement separately. "If we combine these two problems together, we shall not make any progress," he said.

Further on Kebich's Economic Union, Foreign Investment

WS1903143093 Minsk RESPUBLIKA in Russian 11 Mar 93 pp 1,3

[Article by newspaper correspondent Nikolay Matukovskiy: "Vyacheslav Kebich Dots His 'I's"]

[Text] All the journalists had been waiting for Kebich's press conference for quite a long time, because each time the prime minister holds a press conference, he puts forward new and original proposals. This day, Vyacheslav Kebich again met their expectations. Some of his ideas could be called "sensational."

For example, his remarks on his prospective official statement on the need to create a more stable and efficient economic union of four republics—Russia, Belarus, Ukraine, and Kazakhstan—within the CIS. To his mind, Belarus cannot exist alone, without close cooperation with them. Only a close union with these republics can provide a sound economy and high living standards for our people.

Life itself makes us unite. We should be aware of the fact that only together can we get away from the socialist deadlock. Nobody will give us big credits. We must earn money ourselves by taking part in joint interstate ventures....

The need for such joint actions was proved by joint Belarusian-Russian oil and gas extraction in Siberia. I always considered it necessary to have our own enterprises there. We should have our own derricks, oil wells, and bore holes. Extraction of oil and gas is labor consuming and expensive. Even Russia cannot provide itself with the energy resources. So, we should overcome the energy crisis ourselves.

The new economic union of four republics will not serve as a substitute for the CIS. It will improve and strengthen it. Answering the question if this initiative could find support among the other CIS leaders, Kebich responded in the affirmative and mentioned that lately, Ukrainian leaders have become more realistic.

Vyacheslav Kebich said that he is going to visit Russia, Kazakhstan, and Ukraine; in addition, he is planning to sign a number of intergovernmental agreements on closer cooperation with Latvia and Lithuania.

The second "sensational" news at this press conference was Kebich's detailed report on the measures for encouraging foreign investments in Belarus. He explained his ideas speaking about Belarusian-German cooperation. German partners are always dutiful and disciplined in the accomplishment of all the signed contracts. But each

partner is looking for his own profits and wants to be sure that we are able to pay and if we can guarantee his investment.

It is international practice to guarantee the state property mortgage for foreign investments. I foresee that some windbags will start crying that we are selling Belarus! I want to explain that we are not going to sell anything or give credits to anyone. We are going to use the world practice of mortgaging the state property which is more efficient than the system of credits.

Journalists asked a lot of questions on the economic situation in Belarus, on price hikes, on the deterioration of people's standard of living. Kebich did not want to smooth things over and tried to give detailed replies. He explained that the rise of prices during the transition period from the "planned" to the market economy was inevitable. It was the government's task to curb the prices and provide social protection for the poor. In general, we managed to control the situation. Lately, some new documents providing social protection for pensioners have been elaborated.

But we cannot be responsible for everything. Russia has suddenly raised prices on energy resources. This brought along the rise of prices on foodstuffs and consumer goods. In addition, we cannot stop the smuggling of our foodstuffs to the Baltic states.

At last, the last "sensation." In mass media, there were some reports on Kebich's relatives being involved in embezzlements. The prime minister denied these accusations and called them "dirty fabrications which do not correspond to reality. This is an attempt to discredit my family and me, to cast suspicion on the government which is pursuing the course of gradual transition toward the market economy. The discreditors are dishonest because there is not a particle of truth in their tales." Such methods of political battle are unscrupulous.

Responding to the question of whether this is the beginning of his political campaign for the presidency, Kebich said that he was not going to struggle for presidency, but the attempts to discredit him show that some political groups have already started their political campaigns. Then he added that he was shocked to hear about this slander while he was in the hospital, when he was ill and could not defend himself.

Vyacheslav Kebich read his letter addressed to Belarusian General Prosecutor Vasiliy Sholodonov in which he asked him to inspect the slandering information and to act according to the Belarusian legislation.

Moldova

Republic Reacts to Yeltsin Actions, Situation in Russia

Government Statement Supports Democracy

AU2303091093 Chisinau BASAPRESS in English 1930 GMT 22 Mar 93

[Text] Chisinau, BASAPRESS, 22/3/1993—In the communique released by the Press department of the president it is shown that the Moldovan Republic, as well as all other republics of the former USSR are interested in Russia becoming a state with real democracy because only in these conditions can a revival of the communist system and a subsequent return of the Soviet Empire be prevented. In the communique formulated by President Snegur concerning the attitude of the Moldovan Government towards the events of the last hours in Russia, it is underlined that for Moldova in particular the collapse of the Russian democratic system represents the return to power of the initiators of Moldova's disintegration, the ideologists of imperialist thinking, who despite the loss of many lives continue to erect obstacles to the process of peace-making in Tiraspol through different official and unofficial channels. The Moldovan Government believes that it is extremely important to resolve this crisis by democratic means. In its communique, the Moldovan Government expresses hope that the measures which are taken to cancel the danger of the collapse of democracy and blocking of economic reforms will not harm the rights, freedom, and security of citizens and will not lead to a new explosion of violence.

Snegur Sends Condolences

LD2303110493 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1038 GMT 23 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Valery Demidetsky]

[Text] Chisinau March 23 TASS—Moldovan President Mircea Snegur has backed Boris Yeltsin's course of reforms, this is pointed out in his message of condolences addressed to the Russian president today in connection with his mother's death.

Parliament speaker Petru Lucinschi has expressed concern about the aggravation of the situation in Russia which, in his opinion, may tell most negatively on Moldova, which is extremely integrated into it. He preferred not to comment on the situation due to lack of sufficiently exhaustive information. At the same time, Lucinschi said that Russia could hardly turn back, because it has been integrated into the world community and there is simply no other way but to continue the reforms. The speaker wished the Russian leaders to arrive at concord and to continue the democratic reforms in the country.

The Social-Democratic Party of Moldova released a statement today, moving that the heads of state of the republics of the former USSR shhuld urgently begin consultations to set up a mechanism of collective security due to the aggravation of the situation in Russia.

May Refuel Dniester Conflict

LD2303135493 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1328 GMT 23 Mar 93

[By MOLDOVA-PRESS correspondent for TASS]

[Text] Chisinau March 23 TASS—Moldovan President Mircea Snegur fears that collapse of democracy in Russia may result in a resumption of the conflict in the breakaway

Dniester region of Moldova as supporters of separatism may come to power in Moldova, acording to his statement published by local press on Tuesday.

Snegur stressed it is extremely important that the political crisis in Russia is solved in a democratic way.

Leaders 'Worried' by Events

LD2203150093 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1238 GMT 22 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Valeriy Demidetskiy]

[Text] Chisinau, 22 Mar—Victor Puscasu, deputy chairman of Moldova's parliament, has told an ITAR-TASS correspondent that the republic's leadership is worried by the confrontation between the legislative and executive powers in Russia. "A worsening of the situation there will inevitably affect our economy and internal political situation. What is happening in Russia is above all an internal affair of Russia and it is not for me to give advice and recommendations. However, I would genuinely like Russia's leaders to come to an agreement and continue the very necessary economic reforms and democratic transformations in the country," Viktor Puscasu noted.

Lucinschi Refrains From 'Concrete Attitude'

AU2203213593 Chisinau BASAPRESS in English 1930 GMT 22 Mar 93

[Text] The president of the Moldovan Parliament, Petru Lucinschi, declared that he could not define any concrete attitude toward the events in Russia because he has no appropriate information concerning the situation in Moscow except from the mass media. Today, during the press conference organized by Petru Lucinschi, he expressed hopes that this conflict would be resolved by democratic measures but he did not exclude another result. In addition Petru Lucinschi stated that instability in Russia would directly influence the political and social situation in the republic. The president of the Moldovan Parliament said that the declaration concerning this point could be made by President Mircea Snegur. Petru Lucinschi estimated that relations between Chisinau and Moscow are pretty really good. [sentence as received]

Defense Minister Supports Neutrality

AU2203213393 Chisinau BASAPRESS in English 1930 GMT 22 Mar 93

[Text] Chisinau, BASAPRESS, 22/3/1993—"Recent events from Russia would create a social and economic situation in Moldova and would prevent the resolution of many problems which are important to our state" declared Pavel Creanga, minister of defense of Moldova, to a BASA correspondent. "In the event of the unleashing of military conflict on the territory of Russia" continued Pavel Creanga "we will remain neutral because the national army defends the integrity and sovereignty of Moldova. I believe however that the situation in Russia does not represent a real danger to our state" concluded the minister of defense.

Official Explains Delay in Reaction

AU2303135293 Chisinau BASAPRESS in English 1930 GMT 22 Mar 93

[Text] Chisinau BASAPRESS, 22/3/1993—The lack of reaction from the part of the authorities of Chisinau towards the events in Moscow is explained by the absence of information, stated the president of the Commission for Foreign Relations of the Parliament of Moldova, Alexandru Buruiana, while being questioned by BASA AGENCY. "By the morning of March 22 the Embassy of Moldova in Moscow did not officially inform us and news from the mass-media was not sufficient for us to take decisions," mentioned Alexandru Buruiana. The president of the parliamentary commission is convinced about the fact that in such a case officials from Chisinau must show self-control in connection to the West's example of rushing to officially declare their support towards any of the parties involved in the conflict in Russia. Alexandru Buruiana underlined: "Anyway, we will have to deal with those authorities which will come to power in Russia."

Envoy Discusses 14 Mar Anti-Russian Rally in Chisinau

AU2003200493 Chisinau BASAPRESS in English 1634 GMT 20 Mar 93

[Text] Chisinau BASAPRESS, 20/3/1993—Some of the political parties from Moldova are attempting to speculate on the shoulders of the political detainees from Tiraspol in order to fulfill their goals, stated Vladimir Yakovlevich Plechko, Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Ambassador of the Russia Federation in Chisinau, in an interview to the weekly RESPUBLIKA. Talking about the rally of 14 March which took place in front of the Russian Embassy in Chisinau, Vladimir Plechko mentioned that the calculated aim by the demonstrators was "noise" and not "freedom for political detainees." "It is not difficult to realize that the noisy demonstration from the city center was not as necessary for the political detainees as it was for the politicians who do not have many aces," mentioned the Russian ambassador. In his opinion, it seems that the people began to realize the impact of "demonstrators, passions." Under such circumstances accusations of "betrayal" by the leaders of Moldova because they entered into a dialogue with Dniester are cynical, Vladimir Plechko points out.

Draft Constitution Published for Public Discussion

OW1903223293 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1717 GMT 19 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Moldovan mass media has published a draft constitution for nation-wide discussion. The Moldovan parliament will get back to constitutional debates in two-months' time.

The Moldovan parliament had to ask the people for advice after it failed to produce a compromise formula on a

number of fundamental articles. It was decided to publish all options suggested by the parliamentary factions. They concern the official language (Moldovan or Romanian), administrative and territorial division, type of government (parliamentary or presidential), as well as articles saying that "Moldova is a national, united, inseparable, sovereign and independent state".

The draft says nothing about the status of Trans-Dniesteria or areas populated by the Turkish-speaking Gagauz people. Tiraspol and Komrat have called on the people of their regions to refrain from discussing Moldova's new constitution.

Parliament Fails To Resolve 'Most Key Questions'

OW1903205393 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1610 GMT 19 Mar 93

[By Andrey Pershin, Andrey Petrovskiy, Vladimir Shishlin, and Boris Grishchenko; from the "Presidential Bulletin" feature; item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The parliamentary session that has just closed failed to resolve most key questions, local observers think. This is confirmed by the closing address of speaker Petru Lucinschi, who said that numerous "vitally important legislative acts have not been adopted; even the constitutional draft has not gone through the first reading."

IF [INTERFAX] Note: Following preliminary debates, the draft has been submitted to "popular scrutiny." The key and most controversial point is the provision that Moldova is a "national sovereign and independent, united and indivisible state."

The chief cause of poor performance is, the speaker thinks, the bitter political struggle. "The top legislative body has experienced a most acute crisis from which it has not fully recovered," he noted. He did not rule out calling an emergency session to resolve "certain political problems." One of these problems, observers think, is the Trans-Dniester confrontation and the administrative territorial structure of the country. They take note of the recent meeting of speaker Lucinschi and premier Andrei Sangheli with the leadership of the self-proclaimed Dniester Moldavian Republic (TMR).

In an INTERFAX interview Grigory Marakutsa, TMR speaker who had attended the talks, said that the meeting confirmed the possibility of compromise. He admitted that the TMR and Chisinau differed on key issues but said, "This does not imply that a dialog is out of the question." The most important result of the talks, he thinks, is that the negotiators confirmed their commitment to political settlement and rejected the use of force. Both sides also agree that the economic ties between the two banks of the Dniester must be restored and a common financial system preserved.

Defense Minister Reiterates Need for New Army

AU1903152093 Chisinau BASAPRESS in English 1928 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Text] Chiusinau, BASAPRESS, 19/3/1993—The Defense Minister of Moldova, stated in the weekly OASTEA MOLDOVEI [MOLDOVA'S ARMY] that Moldova needs another type of army, which is totally different to the former Soviet army. In the opinion of the minister the difference, it will be achieved through changes of staff, weaponry as well as ways defense of the state, by taking into account the experience accumulated from the Dniester conflict will be taken into account. Therefore Moldova has another principle of concentrating its Armed Forces, General Creanga stressed. Under this principle, the Moldovan Armed Forces are split into two basic formations: regular troops which will fulfill the very task of defending the country and the territorial troops which will defend the districts' populations. Pavel Creanga, points out that the relationships between the Moldovan soldiers are suffering due to the influence of Soviet inheritance, which encourages a lower level of culture. General Creanga stressed that the Ministry of Defense is planning the opening of a military school this year. "The interests of our state resides in keeping the sovereignty and the territorial integrity of Moldova", concluded General Pavel Creanga.

Kazakhstan

Nazarbayev Issues Decree on Privatization

LD1303182093 Alma-Ata KAZTAG in Russian 1100 GMT 11 Mar 93

["Decree of the President of Kazakhstan on Additional Measures for Privatization of Property of State Agricultural, Procurement, Processing and Service Enterprises of the Agro-Industrial Complex"—read by announcer]

[Excerpts] In the interests of stabilizing the economy of the agro-industrial complex, creating more favorable conditions for wide-scale privatization in accordance with the national program of denationalization and privatization in the Republic of Kazakhstan in the years 1993-1995 (the second stage), and the speediest formation of the market infrastructure as well as an effective utilization of the available industrial potential and development of the decree of the president of Kazakhstan "On Urgent Measures for Privatization of Property of the State Agricultural, Procurement, Processing and Service Enterprises of the Agro-Industrial Complex" dated 8 February, 1992, number 616 (SAPP RESPUBLIKI KAZAKHSTANIA, 1992, number 4, p. 56), I decree:

1. The State Committee for State Property of the Republic of Kazakhstan, its territorial committees with the participation of the Kazakhstani Ministry of Agriculture and other interested organizations, and also bodies of the executive authorities in the localities are to finish denationalization and privatization of enterprises of the agro-industrial complex in the years 1993-1995.

2. It is to be established that privatization of the property of state farms and other state agricultural enterprises will be carried out with the owner's initiative mainly by means of selling to the members of working collectives, determining the proportions of property (shares) for each of them. During redemption of the property, staff and pensioners of the privatized farm can use housing coupons provided to them as a means of payment. Up to 75 percent of the sale price of the agricultural enterprise property can be paid with these coupons. The owners of the property shares are issued a property rights certificate. Share owners have the right, by means of voluntary unification of land and property shares and also on the basis of structural subdivisions of agricultural enterprises (sections, teams, livestock units production shops), to create minor enterprises, agricultural industrial cooperatives, peasants' farms, and their associations based on private property with the rights of a legal entity. An exchange of property shares between the owners and also their sale within the farm is allowed toward this goal. For maintaining established industrial ties, rational utilization of the common infrastructure, and a joint carrying-out of some agricultural functions, these formations can unite in associations or amalgamations on a voluntary basis.

3. During privatization of state farms and other state agricultural enterprises (except large cattle-breeding complexes, poultry farms, hothouse farms, experimental-educational farms of institutions of higher education and technical colleges, experimental, plant, and animal breeding centers, pedigree units and pedigree state farms, and selective-experimental farms of scientific research institutes subject to flotation) an absolute right for a member of staff to withdraw from the enterprise and be allotted a share of land and a property share in accordance with established procedure for organizing a peasant farm, is to be guaranteed.

4. The main form of rearrangement of procurement, processing, and service enterprises of the agro-industrial complex is to be floatation, together with the creation on their basis of open-type joint stock enterprises granting agricultural goods producers who have contractual ties with the enterprises being floated, preferential right to obtain shares. The following order of placing shares (except monopolist enterprises) should be determined:

a. no less than 50 percent of the overall number of shares are to be sold to agricultural goods producers;

b. 10 percent of shares is to be transferred free of charge to the collective members and to persons who have retired from the present enterprise. All these shares are privileged ones;

c. up to 10 percent of shares can be sold to related enterprises for their face value; and

d. the rest of the shares remain state-owned and can be sold freely.

5. Placing of shares for monopoly enterprises is carried out in the following order:

a. no less than 40 percent of the overall number of shares is to be sold to agricultural goods producers;

b. 10 percent of shares is to be transferred to the collective members free of charge, and also to persons who have retired from the present enterprise. All these shares are privileged ones;

c. up to 10 percent of shares can be sold to related enterprises and foreign investors;

d. the controlling block of shares (no less than 35 percent of the overall number of shares) and undistributed shares remain state-owned. The State Committee for State Property of the Republic of Kazakhstan defines the holder of the state block of shares.

The State Committee for the Antimonopoly Policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan, together with the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Kazakhstan are to work out special provisions for defining monopoly enterprises in the agro-industrial complex by 1 April 1993.

6. It is to be defined that the dividends added to shares that are state-owned, when necessary, according to the decision of the State Committee for State Property of the Republic

of Kazakhstan, can be directed towards building, reconstruction, and technical re-gearing of a floated agro-industrial enterprise.

7. The State Committee for State Property of the Republic of Kazakhstan together with the bodies of [word indistinct] are to envisage carrying out special contests within the minor privatization program framework to sell trade and public catering establishments to representatives of agriculture with a view to develop services for the population.

8. It is to be established that the producers of agricultural products that obtain shares of procurement and processing enterprises that are being rearranged into joint stock companies, get shares defined by legislation. The State Committee for State Property of the Republic of Kazakhstan together with the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Kazakhstan in a fortnight's time [passage indistinct]

9. Enterprises that were handed over to the collective ownership before are subject to being reorganized into farming partnerships or joint stock companies in accordance with the national program for denationalization and privatization in the republic. [passage indistinct]

10. [passage omitted]

11. In connection with the adoption of the present decree, paragraphs 3 and 4 [passage indistinct] "On Urgent Measures for Privatization of the [passage indistinct] Service Enterprises of Agro-Industrial Complex" of 8 February 1992, number 616 are recognized as invalid.

[Signed] President N. Nazarbayev

[Dated] Alma-Ata, 5 March, 1993

Nazarbayev Gives New Year Festival Address

LD2203175793 Alma-Ata Kazakh Radio Network in Russian 0500 GMT 22 Mar 93

[Address by Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbayev outside Palace of the Republic in Alma-Ata on 22 March—live or recorded]

[Text] The Naw-Ruz [New Year Festival] was always considered to be a festival of revival, a festival of renewal, a festival of spring, a festival of happiness. Since bygone days this tradition has been handed down from generation to generation in the sense that on the Naw-Ruz day elders meet, relatives have get-togethers, they analyze the year that they lived through, ask each other for forgiveness if they had misfortunes in their relationships, and wish each other well in the coming year.

We are living through a difficult time in the history of our state. We achieved our independence, our sovereignty through suffering, we are building new statehood, we are walking toward democracy, and we are moving toward the freedom of man. Therefore, on this bright day, allow me on behalf of the leadership of the republic, on behalf of our parliament, to wish you, and through you, all the people of Kazakhstan, all the best in the coming year, prosperity, a good year, a good harvest, a rich year, so as to overcome our difficulties by hard work.

Everything is in our hands, everything depends on how we work, on how hard we work and how responsible an approach we take, and every citizen will hold himself obliged to observe our laws and the constitution and follow the track that we are calling for, the track of democracy; thus the freedom of man, independence, and victory will be ours. Allow me to wish you happiness, well-being, and prosperity.

Kyrgyzstan

Parliament Speaker 'Deeply Concerned' by Russian Events

LD2203145993 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1238 GMT 22 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Boris Maynayev]

[Text] Bishkek, 22 Mar—"I am deeply concerned by the fact that relations between the president and the Russian Supreme Soviet have become deadlocked," Medetkan Sherimkulov, chairman of the Kyrgyz Supreme Soviet, said today. Russia's leaders and all political forces must be sensible and not permit confrontation, which is fraught with future danger, especially for Russians, he thinks.

Kyrgyz President Askar Akayev is currently studying the situation and will voice his opinion a little later.

Akayev Statement Backs Yeltsin

LD2303084693 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0725 GMT 23 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Viktor Maynayev]

[Text] Bishkek, 23 March—The press service of the president of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan has today circulated Askar Akayev's statement issued in connection with Russian President Boris Yeltsin's address to the citizens of Russia. It says that the address indicates a growing political crisis in the top echelons of power, which can lead to extremely serious destabilization of the situation not just in Russia but in other CIS states as well. "The situation in Russia causes concern and anxiety in Kyrgyzstan," Askar Akayev states. "It is of vital importance to Kyrgyzstan, which has close economic, cultural, and political ties with Russia, that Russia does not reverse its course towards democracy and the market economy. I have always believed, and still believe, that Boris Yeltsin is one of the main guarantors of this progress. He represents, to a great extent, my hopes for the success of the democratic reforms in Russia because he plays an exceptional role in the process of these reforms. In my opinion, the attempt by the Russian president—who was elected by popular vote—to give his people an opportunity to decide for themselves which political system, ways, and forms of democratic development they want is completely legitimate," stressed the president of Kyrgyzstan. "In the present situation, I believe it is my human duty to express my support for the

courageous and noble efforts being made by President Yeltsin in his struggle for the Russia's bright future," concluded Kyrgyz President Askar Akayev.

Official Believes Anti-Russian Sentiment Subsiding

OW2203145193 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1408 GMT 22 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] A wave of national-patriotism has come upon us and anti-Russian moods are leaving the scene; a process of sobering is taking place in Kyrgyzstan following euphoria caused by independence gained by the republic," INTERFAX learned from the presidential adviser on national issues, Salidzhan Dzhigitov.

He believes that currently only mono-national movements can present a threat to political stability in Kyrgyzstan. At the same time, Dzhigitov pointed out that the party Ata-meken and the Republican Popular Party, now being created, are actively involving representatives of other nationalities. Until now political leaders, who called themselves democrats, actually held ethnocratic ideas. He expressed the opinion that the Party of National Revival, Asaba, and the Erkin Kyrgyzstan party were not only "mono-national," but were also divided internally according to regional-territorial areas.

Dzhigitov has ruled out the possibility of revenge by communists in Kyrgyzstan, though they are pursuing a more active policy and conducted a congress of their party in the middle of March. Leaders who came to power in this organization, are not suitable for political struggle, Dzhigitov says, because "their image has substantially been spoiled by the August 1991 coup and they do not enjoy the wide support of the people."

Armenian President Begins Visit to Bishkek

LD1903092093 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0745 GMT 19 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correpondent Boris Maynayev]

[Text] Bishkek, 19 Mar—The two-day visit to Kyrgyzstan by Armenian President Levon Ter-Petrosyan has begun. Today he is to meet with the leadership of Kyrgyzstan. It is expected that a number of intergovernmental agreements will be signed in various spheres of cooperation—in the economy, politics, and culture.

Treaty Signed; Visit Ends

LD2003072293 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0659 GMT 20 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Boris Maynayev]

[Text] Bishkek, 20 Mar—Armenian President Levon Ter-Petrosyan's visit to Kyrgyzstan has ended with the signing of a treaty on the fundamentals of interstate relations and a protocol on diplomatic cooperation. He flew today from Bishkek to Yerevan.

Tajikistan

Rakhmonov Article on Solutions to Crises

LD1903202593 Dushanbe Radio Dushanbe Network in Tajik 1120 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Article by Imamali Rakhmonov, chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Republic of Tajikistan, entitled "The Path to Salvation From Great and All-Out Crisis" published in the 18 March JAMHURIYAT; announcer-read; monitored in progress]

[Excerpts] ... Sources of economic crisis:

The present economic situation in the republic can undoubtedly be regarded as tragic and critical. Damage in the hundreds of billions of rubles resulted during the civil war. However, the irreparable damage was the loss of lives of tens of thousands of our countrymen, which cannot be put in terms of billions. I think, for the sake of the future of our country, we ought not be at a loss from these terrors. If we do, we will suffer even more.

It is a cause for pleasure that most leaders of the CIS sympathetically understand our economic difficulties and are extending all-around assistance to us. However, our salvation is in our own hands. Therefore, we ought to organize responsible and united labor in all fields of the national economy.

The economic crisis like the political crisis has deep roots. During the second half of the 1980's, efforts began to initiate economic reform, to abandon the dying command and administrative system, to eliminate the great (?technological) crisis in the [word indistinct] economy and to move to a market economy. In the course of these reforms, state policy on prices, state [word indistinct] system, state enterprises becoming business units, the development of collective and private ownership, the introduction of competition, the freeing of prices and similarly other market mechanisms should have become the basic criteria for regulating the economy.

All these factors strictly depend on each other, which can be introduced gradually one after another. In this work, like chess, if one makes a wrong move, he will lose the game. Unfortunately, economic radicalism was at work here as well.

Before the economy left the state monopoly, the new structures and private ownership came into being, and competition started among owners for increasing production, the [words indistinct] freed the prices and abolished state [word indistinct]. All this resulted in devaluation of money and finally its complete (?demise). Now you judge for yourself which would have been better in this regard: playing politics or cooperation on the economy. The entrepreneurial freedom, which was presented from the top, resulted in the enterprises, which were producing raw

material, to take these products out of the country through businessmen for higher profits thus leaving domestic production without raw materials. [passage omitted]

Sources of the spiritual crisis:

The changing nature of social values inevitably leads to the realization of the aims and ways of the future development of the society. The ideological vacuum, which was created after the collapse of the seemingly lasting and rooted, but in practice (?hollow), teachings of communism, resulted in the instability of beliefs, especially among intellectuals. The society openly disintegrated into groups. Three of these groups can be clearly described. The first group includes the supporters of the communist ideology, who have revised their views, taking into account the experience of the development of society. The second group comprises anti-communists who regard themselves as supporters of the universal human values or democracy. The most amazing thing is that Islamic groups and others whose intentions and behavior are miles away from democracy include themselves in this group. Finally, the third group, by far the most populous group in society, are those who have so far not specified their ideological positions. [passage omitted].

It is not a secret that ideological crises stem from political and economic crises, which caused the demise of the unitary state and separatism inside the newly independent states. The events in our own republic can give a reliable answer to this thought. Liberation from spiritual and ideological deadlock is one of the most difficult issues of our times. I think that the [word indistinct] values and our national customs and traditions can be a reliable standpoint for us. It is not important how we are going to create a state. The important thing is the creation of a state where people can breath freely. [passage omitted]

Conclusions:

The new phase of contemporary history of our country is being created by the participation and [word indistinct] of us all. The second half of the 1980's saw the hues and cries of democratic slogans, many-thousand strong gatherings, sweet intentions and dreams of fast achievement of a prosperous life, and then, before our eyes regret, anger, frustration, confrontation, and the barbaric murder of thousands of people. The newly founded democratic movement became a captive of various kinds of political extremism, resulting in national sovereignty instead of national consciousness, which was then replaced by national separation resulting in the creation of national states in place of one great state. [passage omitted]

The supporters of Islamic democrats were acting in this way without fear. They have thrust tens of thousands of people into the fire of civil war and were ready to sacrifice the last Tajik, both from this side and from the other [Afghanistan] to establish an Islamic state. They did not want to take into account the objective grounds of the existence of social structures of the republic and all those fundamental transformations which affected the thinking of society and the world outlook of the people during the years of Soviet rule. They also completely disregarded another important tact: the differences between the religious and ideological traditions of Iran and Afghanistan and of the peoples of Central Asia, and other differences in religious and state systems of these states. The people of Central Asia, especially the Tajiks, will never agree and allow the clergy to interfere in the affairs of the state. [passage omitted]

In our view there is no need for an immediate and total privatization of state ownership. It is possible at the present stage to lease most state ownership to labor collectives provided that they will have no [word indistinct] right to this ownership. We should not forget the bitter experience of total privatization of state ownership in other countries of the CIS. [passage omitted]

Under the prevailing conditions, without the [word indistinct] regulation of this painful process, it would be impossible for the government to move to a market economy. Here, there is no doubt that after the stabilization of an economic situation, we ought to gradually run state enterprises based on market principles, and at the same time engage in the development of the private sector, particularly in the field of consumer goods.

Parallel to the creation and introduction of a legal atmosphere in entrepreneurial activity, factors of administrative management ought to be slackened gradually and should be replaced by financial and loan [word indistinct]. At the present stage, the state ought to regulate production for these purposes: the introduction of an active loan-giving policy and the support of restructuring of economic structures; the enhancement of the export of ready-made goods; the extention of financial assistance to the development of science and technology; the relentless fight against bribery; the support of private entrepreneurship and free market competition; the social protection of low income groups of the population and the provision of proper conditions for people to show their capabilities in work. Enhancement of the regulating influence of the state is the necessary condition [words indistinct] for the successful introduction of economic reforms.

In life everything is connected and linked together. The experience of recent years has shown that any economic program which has been accepted by the people cannot come to fruition if it is not wholeheartedly supported by the state. In the not-too-distant past, we prepared some good economic programs which were all blown away by the political situation.

Today, before we could solve basic economic issues, we are duty-bound first to ensure the security of our state to organize the army and strengthen the militias, the National Security Committee, and the structures of law enforcement, because, a state that cannot protect itself and cannot ensure the rights of its citizens will be of no use.

Strengthening our state structures should take place in parallel with (?strengthening) the foreign policy, enhancing inter-state relations with the countries of the CIS and other states of the world. Here one point should be stressed in

particular. Notwithstanding the political damage inflicted on the prestige of our republic by the bloody actions of the Islamic democrats, the people of Tajikistan by their heroic struggle against these usurpers, as the barometer of international relations indicate, not only attracted the sympathy and solidarity of world public, but has also received considerable moral, political, and material assistance.

In the circle of the Commonwealth of Independent States, Tajikistan enjoys an equal and independent position as far as the solution of political, economic, and other issues are concerned.

Thanks to the efforts of healthy forces of the republic, even during their rule, the Islamic-inclined democrats were unable to harm our relations with fraternal countries.

Delegations from our country are constantly and actively participating in the gatherings of the heads of states and governments of the CIS. We have a firm and principled stance vis-a- vis the need for further fruitful economic cooperation between the countries of the CIS and in solutions of problems. [passage omitted]

Tajikistan, parallel to acquiring economic and political possibilities, is making an all-around effort to occupy a worthy place in its relations with the international community. Some time ago, our state and government delegations visited the great neighboring countries of China and India. Our political and economic relations with the outside world should be further strengthened in other spheres as well. At the same time, in my opinion, we should be cautious toward engaging in foreign visits for the sake of cosmetic benefits. The experience of a number of countries of the CIS shows that the young diplomacy of these countries most of the time disregard the fact that the aim of establishing foreign relations more than anything else is to gain economic benefits.

We ought to learn trades which will be beneficial to us, should acquire advantageous foreign credit, should build joint enterprises, and, in other words, to take advantage of the good possibilities of human civilization.

Today, we fully realize the complexity and difficulty of all those problems which are facing our young and independent state. Relying on the will and support of the people, we will move firmly and resolutely ahead in the path chosen by the people to build a secular, democratic, and law-abiding state.

Rakhmonov Receives Afghan Envoy, President's Letter

LD2203140293 Dushanbe Radio Dushanbe Network in Tajik 1200 GMT 22 Mar 93

[Text] Imamali Rakhmonov, chairman of the Republic of Tajikistan's Supreme Soviet, received Ibrahim Warsachi, political adviser on international issues to the president of the Islamic State of Afghanistan, yesterday. Ibrahim Warsachi handed over a personal letter from Borhanoddin Rabbani, president of the Islamic State of Afghanistan, to Imamali Rakhmonov.

During talks, which were also attended by Ishrafsho, economic relations adviser to the president of the Islamic State of Afghanistan; Mohammad Omar Asir, Afghan consul in Dushanbe; and Rashid Olimov, minister of foreign affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan, issues of the speedy return to their homeland of Tajik refugees who are in Afghanistan and relations between the two countries were discussed.

The talks were held in a spirit of sincerity and understanding.

Turkmenistan

President Arrives on Visit to United States

LD2203033493 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0036 GMT 22 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Mikhail Kolesnichenko]

[Text] New York, 22 Mar—Turkmen President Saparmurad Niyazov arrived in the United States on a working visit on 21 March. The purpose of his six-day tour is to strengthen the close bilateral contacts that have recently emerged thanks to the efforts of a number of U.S. political figures. Former U.S. Secretary of State Alexander Haig and representatives of certain influential U.S. business quarters, interested in cooperating with Turkmenistan as a reliable and promising partner in Central Asia, have been very instrumental in boosting Turkmen-American links.

The Turkmen head of state began his visit in New York. Here he will meet UN Secretary General Butrus Butrus-Ghali, representatives of financial circles, and speak at a number of prestigious brain trusts. In Washington, negotiations between Saparmurad Niyazov and U.S. Congress leaders, and Bill Clinton's administration are planned.

Niyazov Receives U.S. Ambassador, Military Attache

LD1303145393 Ashgabat Radio Ashgabat Network in Russian 0200 GMT 12 Mar 93

[Text] Yesterday, President of Turkmenistan Saparmyrat Niyazov received His Excellency Hulings, the ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiay of the United States to Turkmenistan, and the military attache of the Embassy of the United States in Moscow [name indisinct]. During the talk, questions concerning the forthcoming visit to the United States by the president of Turkmenistan were discussed. Views were also expressed on some (?aspects) of bilateral cooperation.

President Favors Ties With Russia in Military Sphere

LD1703221193 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1111 GMT 17 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Lyudmila Glazovskaya]

[Text] Ashgabat, 17 Mar—The military treaty between Turkmenistan and Russia, which was concluded 18

months ago, will be supplemented with new articles on cooperation, which will impart to it a more specific and in-depth nature. In particular, it is proposed that the naval forces of Turkmenistan be set up under a joint command and that a military college be opened in Ashgabat. Vladimir Zhurbenko, deputy chief of the General Staff of Russia's Armed Forces, who is in Turkmenistan as the head of a Russian military delegation, reported this to the ITAR-TASS correspondent today.

It is our aim, he added, to study the mechanism of military cooperation between the two states on the spot and to introduce corrections into it that largely concern the law-based and financial status of the troops under the joint command of Russia and Turkmenistan.

In the opinion of Turkmenistan President Saparmurad Niyazov, which he expressed at a meeting with Russian servicemen, Turkmenistani-Russian military cooperation is completely to the satisfaction of both sides. He confirmed that in the future, Turkmenistan will also adhere precisely to this position, which excludes any kind of concept of collective defense within the framework of the CIS, announced at the meeting of heads of state in Minsk. Turkmenistan, he added, will not deploy its troops in any of the CIS countries either, since this is in contradiction to its foreign policy principle of positive neutrality.

The joint forces with Russia, the president stressed, are needed by Turkmenistan in order to have a guarantee of the protection of its sovereignty and independence.

Uzbekistan

Karimov on Ruble Zone, Tajikistan, Russia Ties

PM1703155793 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 17 Mar 93 First Edition p 7

[Vladimir Berezovskiy report: "Together With Russia We Will Achieve A Great Deal"]

[Text] Tashkent—Islam Karimov has given an interview to foreign correspondents. Answering a question about the prospects of the CIS, the president of Uzbekistan expressed confidence in its future. At the same time, he accused "certain circles in Russia" of trying to narrow down the "ruble circle" and push the Central Asian republics out of it. Tashkent is pinning its hopes on the interstate bank created at the last summit in Minsk and will only give up the ruble if Russia introduces its own currency.

The Uzbek leader did not rule out the possibility of his government granting aid to neighboring Tajikistan in the fight against the armed opposition. Islam Karimov cited the treaty on collective security within whose framework the Uzbek peacemaking battalion is participating in the protection of the Afghan-Tajik border.

As leader of the ruling People's Democratic Party, Islam Karimov accused the "Erk" and "Birlik" opposition of not having a clear program for leading the republic out of the crisis and of political extremism. At the same time, the president publicly supported the "Progress of the Fatherland" party for the first time. According to him, it has brought together businessmen and entrepreneurs and will probably obtain a lot of seats in parliament at the upcoming elections.

The president noted that in the past year the volume of production in the republic has fallen by 4.5 percent in all, while the budget deficit has fallen by 5.6 percent, which comes within international standards. In the light, chemical, and oil refining sectors of industry, things are stable. And, on the basis of the results of the first quarter of this year, a surplus is expected for the economic complex as a whole.

Assessing recent events in Russia, the president of Uzbekistan noted that "some people want to duck responsibility for the failure of the reforms; after all, during political squabbles it is easier to 'hush up' economic blunders that have been committed."

In conclusion, I. Karimov stated: "I believe in the future of Russia and I pin all our hopes on its growth. This state will certainly occupy an advanced position. And together we will achieve a great deal."

Karimov Send Butrus-Ghali Message on Tajik Situation

PM1803102993 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 17 Mar 93 p 3

[Adilbek Kaipbergenov report: "What Tone Will the United Nations Adopt?"]

[Text] Tashkent—President Islam Karimov of Uzbekistan has sent UN Secretary General Butrus-Ghali a special message.

It states that the Republic of Uzbekistan positively appraises the measures being taken by Tajikistan's constitutionally elected authorities to restore peace, order, and legality in this weary country, to stabilize the economy, and to provide for the population.

Humanitarian aid to the suffering people via the United Nations and acts of support and charity on the part of Kazakhstan, Russia, the United States, Turkey, China, India, and other countries also warrant high appraisal. It is with a feeling of genuine sympathy that Uzbekistan has sent and continues to send war victims in its neighboring country food, children's clothing, medicines, and construction materials.

Appealing to the secretary general, the president requested help on two questions requiring urgent examination. First—guaranteeing, with the help of the world community, the safety and inviolability of the border between Tajikistan and the Islamic state of Afghanistan. By force of historical development within the former USSR, Tajikistan's peripheral borders have turned out simultaneously to be the outer boundary for all of the region's countries. Between the five Central Asian states which have recently acquired sovereignty and independence there is a complete

lack of anything which might even symbolically signify their internal borders. This means that even the most minor encroachments on the inviolability of Tajikistan's borders may be perceived as a direct attack on the sovereignty of all Central Asian states.

Meanwhile, according to information from reliable sources, the creation of arms depots and camps is being stepped up on the Afghan side with the direct participation and support of extremist centers located on neighboring countries' territory, and sabotage-terrorist groups aiming to conduct subversive operations on the territory of the Central Asian region are being formed.

The other question concerns the fate of tens of thousands of innocent, defenseless people—children, women, and old people who have been forcibly expelled from Tajikistan following torture and threats. In Afghanistan, they have found themselves in a difficult position: They are dying from violence, hunger, and disease, and they need the United Nations' most resolute support for their unimpeded return to their homes.

There can be no underestimating the fresh upsurge in tension which is capable of becoming a powerful detonator of political and social unease in a huge region with nuclear and conventional arms of massive destructive force, the concluding part of the message states. Uzbekistan's head officially requested that the UN secretary general's personal representatives be dispatched to the region to makean objective study of affairs with the aim of drafting a special report for discussion at a Security Council session.

Government Introduces Russian Money Into Circulation

OW2103113393 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1012 GMT 21 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Since March 20, banknotes of the Central Bank of Russia without the Soviet symbols will officially circulate on the territory of Uzbekistan. The banknotes of 100, 200, 500, 1000, 5000, and 10,000 rubles denomination were printed in 1993.

The Central Bank of Uzbekistan reports that all trade organizations, enterprises, offices, saving banks, and post-offices should obligatory receive all kinds of payments.

New banknotes have been introduced into circulation in Uzbekistan in accordance with the agreements reached between the Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin and Uzbek President Islam Karimov on March 19. Now the republic has no need to introduce its own national currency.

President Outlines Relations With Neighbors

NC2303082693 Yerevan Radio Yerevan International Service in Armenian 1630 GMT 22 Mar 93

[Text] The Armenian leadership met with representatives of the Republic's intellectuals yesterday. President Levon Ter-Petrosyan, Prime Minister Grant Bagratyan, Chairman of the Supreme Soviet Babken Ararktsyan, First Deputy Chairman of the Supreme Soviet Ara Saakyan, parliamentarians, and ministers were present at the meeting.

Rafayel Gazaryan, chairman of the Supreme Soviet Standing Commission on Education, Science, Language and Culture; Henrikh Igityan, the director of the Republican Center for Fine Arts Studies; Loiza Samuelyan, professor of arts; Armen Khndikyan, the artistic director of Hrachya Khapanyan Dramatic Theater; Vanik Zakaryan, corresponding member of the Armenian National Academy of Sciences; Meruzhan Ter-Gulanyan, head of the Armenian Supreme Soviet Commission on Information and Press; and others addressed the meeting on behalf of intellectuals.

They touched on issues concerning intellectuals today. They stressed the role of intellectuals in the consolidation of statehood and the preservation of the national character.

In his address, Ter-Petrosyan gave an extensive analysis of Armenia's political situation.

He provided exhaustive explanations on the prospects for resolving the Karabakh conflict, and of forging and developing relations with Russia, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Iran, and Turkey.

He used the term political pragmatism to describe the foreign policy concept adopted by Armenia. The basis of this concept is the realistic assessment of modern international relations.

Ter-Petrosyan stressed the importance of close cooperation with Russia in almost all fields. He emphasized that both Armenia and Russia highly value their bilateral cooperation.

According to the Armenian president, Armenian-Iranian relations are developing positively, and there are good prospects for cooperation in many spheres.

On Armenian-Turkish relations, Ter-Petrosyan emphasized that these relations must be based on realistic political attitudes.

Speaking on Armenian-Georgian relations, the Armenian president stressed that they are traditional and friendly relations rooted in history. He noted with satisfaction that this same attitude is also displayed by the Georgian leadership. The current domestic situation in Georgia, however, does not permit further development of these ties. The president added that political stability and a stable government in Georgia is in Armenia's interest.

Next, the Armenian prime minister replied to questions from the representatives of Armenia's intellectuals.

Supreme Soviet Decides To Activate Nuclear Plant

OW1903181193 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1607 GMT 19 Mar 93

[Report prepared by Andrey Pershin, Andrey Petrovskiy, and Vladimir Shishlin; edited by Boris Grishchenko; from the "Presidential Bulletin" feature—item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Armenian nuclear power plant will be put back into operation. On Thursday [18 March] the republic's Supreme Soviet passed this decision at its closed session convened in accordance with a decree by President Ter-Petrosyan. The parliament's resolution recognizes the resolution dated April 17, 1992 invalid (the latter envisaged that any issue related to exploitation of the Armenian nuclear power plant or construction of a new station should be solved by means of a referendum). The parliament has set the government to solve this task.

IF [INTERFAX] Note: The Armenian nuclear power plant was shut down by the resolution of the Soviet government in 1989 after the severe earthquake on December 7, 1988. The plant provided 40% of Armenia's energy requirements.

Commenting on this event in his exclusive interview with Interfax, the state Energy Minister Sepuh Tashchyan declared that the parliament's decision will allow the cabinet to shortly put the station into operation. However, the Minister emphasized, half a year is needed to conduct research work in order to examine the present state of the station and 12 months more are needed to put it back into operation.

Consequently, Tashchyan says, the Armenian nuclear power station could only be put back into operation in 1994. The Minister stressed that approximately $30-50 Mn [million] are necessary to put the second block of the plant into operation. To this effect the Armenian leadership is negotiating with several foreign firms which can render technical assistance and financial aid to the republic.

Stepanaker? Attacked; 'Guerrilla Movement' Expanding

LD1803135293 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1210 GMT 18 Mar 93

[By ARMENPRESS correspondent Boris Kyufaryan for TASS]

[Text] Yerevan, 18 Mar (ITAR-TASS)—Last night was difficult for the residents of Stepanakert. The city came under shellfire from long-range weapons in bases located in Azerbaijan's Agdamskiy Rayon. According to a claim by

the staff of the Nagorno-Karabakh self-defense forces, it passed without serious consequences and casualties. The fire was not returned.

The same source reports that in northern Nagorno-Karabakh fighting continued today on the outskirts of Mardakert rayon center which is occupied by the Azerbaijani forces. In this zone the guerrilla movement is expanding; especially active is the detachment from the major settlement of Gyulistan where a treaty on Karabakh joining Russia was once signed. The residents of this and other Armenian villages of Shaumyanovskiy rayon have taken to the woods and mountains to carry on the resistance. With their help the road has been barred by which reinforcements were taken from Azerbaijan's Kelbadzharskiy rayon to units of the Azerbaijani Army located in Mardakert.

Fighting Continues Near Mardakert in Karabakh

NC2203152793 Yerevan Armenia's Radio First Program Network in Armenian 1400 GMT 22 Mar 93

[Text] KARABAKH NEWS AGENCY cites self-defense forces headquarters as reporting that the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic's [NKR] self-defense forces have launched a decisive counterattack and fully liberated Nerkin-Oratag in Mardakertskiy Rayon. The fighting is continuing at the approaches of Mardakert. According to preliminary reports, there are losses on both sides.

It is also reported from Stepanakert that a relative calm prevailed in the other regions of NKR and along the Lachin humanitarian corridor. Traffic on the Goris-Lachin-Stepanakert road is moving unimpeded.

KARABAKH NEWS AGENCY also reported according to the information provided by Serge Sargisyan, head of NKR self-defense forces headquarters, that 250 Azerbaijani soldiers were killed, and one helicopter, 11 armored cars, and three military aircraft were destroyed in various battles in Karabakh in January. Since 5 January, 25 armored cars have been destroyed and nearly 600 Azerbaijani soldiers killed. Twenty-one Azerbaijani soldiers were killed during the liberation of Dzhanyatag and Gyulatag on 17 March alone.

Azerbaijan

Presidential Press Secretary on 'Concern' Over Russia

OW2203143893 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1407 GMT 22 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] An ill-considered and hasty reaction to the recent events in Russia could make matters even worse, the press secretary of the Azerbaijani president's office, Arif Aliyev, told INTERFAX. According to Aliyev, Azerbaijani President Abulfaz Elchibey said last week that Boris Yeltsin, as a president elected by the whole nation, should carry through the reforms for whose implementation parliament had given him special powers. "Stopping halfway may prove tragic for the entire democratization process," Aliyev said.

He said the latest developments in Russia were causing concern in Azerbaijan. Neither the legislative nor the executive branch could achieve anything if the confrontation between them continued, Aliyev said.

'Fierce Battles' Reported in Conflict Zone

LD2203202793 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1750 GMT 22 Mar 93

[By AZERTAG correspondent]

[Text] Baku, 22 March (TASS)—The situation in the conflict zone sharply deteriorated today. The Azerbaijan Defense Ministry reports that fierce battles are going on to capture strategic heights near the town of Agdere. Armenian formations are trying to launch an offensive in the direction of villages in Agdamskiy rayon. However, their attempts are being rebuffed by subunits of the Azerbaijan National Army.

Nagorno-Karabakh Defense Forces Advance on Mardakert

OW2203212393 Moscow INTERFAX in English 2038 GMT 22 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Karabakh News Agency (KAN) has reported that Nagorno-Karabakh's self-defense forces launched a counter-offensive on Monday [22 March], liberating the village of Nerkin Oratag. According to the agency, fighting is going on at the approaches to Mardakert, with losses having been sustained on both sides. Some units of the self-defense forces are now at a distance of merely 3 km (1.9 miles) from the town, the agency said.

The self-defense forces' commander, Serzh Sarkisian, said that, during January, the Azerbaijanis had lost some 250 soldiers, 17 armored vehicles, three warplanes, and one helicopter.

Armenian Forces Step Up Attacks in Nagorno-Karabakh

LD2303123093 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1029 GMT 23 Mar 93

[By AZERTAG correspondent Elchin Sardarov for TASS]

[Text] Baku, 23 Mar—The latest offensive of the Armenian task force was rebuffed today in the north of Nagorno-Karabakh, the national television reported this morning, quoting the Azerbaijan Defense Ministry. According to latest reports, "in order to capture populated localities the enemy has also intensified his actions in Khodzhavenskiy, Agdamskiy, Lachinskiy and Kubatlinskiy Rayons. Enemy subunits continue to shell from the

Armenian territory border villages Akstafinskiy, Tauzskiy, and Zangelanskiy Rayons in Azerbaijan."

Georgia

More on Shevardnadze Comments on Russia, Talk With Gore

OW2203172793 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1640 GMT 22 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] "An absolutely correct but belated measure," Georgian leader Eduard Shevardnadze called the Russian president's plan for overcoming the power crisis in Russia. Speaking Monday on national radio, Shevardnadze said that President Boris Yeltsin has no alternative in Russia today. Moreover, the head of the Georgian state urged that the critical Russia's critical condition at this time not be overlooked. He said that the empire is collapsing, and that it could pull down both former Soviet republics and Europe in the process.

Shevardnadze feels that if the confrontation in Russia leads to a civil war, an organization like NATO will have to play an entirely new role. He believes that NATO should ensure the security of Georgia and other former Soviet republics. However, Shevardnadze hopes the situation will not go that far. He said that Yeltsin has many supporters in Russia.

At a press conference on Sunday Shevardnadze expressed concern over the stance of Russian Vice President Aleksandr Rutskoy. The Georgian leader thinks the statement the vice president made Saturday "seriously complicates the situation." The Georgian leader noted that the recent events in Russia are a testament to the deep political and economic crisis in the country. He pointed out that he warned long ago of the real danger of a reactionary coup in Russia. The process, he believes, began during the 7th Congress of People's Deputies. Shevardnadze said he had warned Yeltsin and Western politicians several times that this represents a real danger for the whole world. "In the classic form," the Georgian leader claimed, "an attempt at a reactionary coup was made at the 8th Congress."

In a telephone conversation late Saturday evening with U.S. Vice-President Al Gore, Shevardnadze supported the Russian president's decision to introduce special rule. The Georgian leader said he hoped the people would support Yeltsin, since "the decision he took directly protects the interests of Russia." Shevardnadze thanked the vice-president for the political, economic, and moral help and support that the United States has given Georgia.

Vice-President Gore said that what is happening today in Abkhazia is a direct reflection of the circumstances which have arisen in Russia itself. He said he hoped that at the upcoming U.S.-Russian summit in Vancouver on April 4 they would also discuss the situation in Georgia.

Shevardnadze Appoints New Members of Security Council

AU2303082593 Tbilisi SAKARTVELOS RESPUBLIKA in Georgian 18 Mar 93 p 1

["Order of the Georgian head of state, commander in chief of the Armed Forces, on the Introduction of Changes to the Composition of the Georgian National Security and Defense Council" issued in Tbilisi on 16 March]

[Text] In connection with the emergency situation that has been created, the following have been brought into the Georgian National Security and Defense Council:

Konstantine Gabashvili—mayor of the city of Tbilisi;

Zurab Kervalishvili—vice-premier of the Georgian Cabinet of Ministers;

Avtandil Margiani—vice-premier of the Georgian Cabinet of Ministers.

[Signed] Eduard Shevardnadze
[Dated] Tbilisi, 16 March 1993

Defense Ministry Reports Relative Calm in Abkhazia

OW2203145493 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1408 GMT 22 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The night of March 21 and the morning of March 22 passed relatively calmly in Abkhazia. The press center of the Georgian Defense Ministry told INTERFAX that there was no fighting in the Ochamchira Region or along the Gumista River. There was no shooting Monday [22 March] morning.

On Sunday, according to an agreement made, fighting was stopped on all front lines along the Gumista River in order to exchange the bodies of casualties. However, the military department claims that Abkhazia violated the armistice, killing an unarmed Georgian soldier during the body collection.

According to the Abkhazian Defense Ministry, during the temporary cease fire there was no fighting on the Gumista front, and there was only occasional shooting on the left flank of the front.

Gudauta reports that occasional clashes have broken out in the Ochamchira region of Abkhazia, and that Georgian equipment and soldiers are being sent from Sukhumi to Ochamchira.

On Sunday a joint commission from the UN and the CSCE arrived in Gudauta to observe the worsening military and political situation in Abkhazia. INTERFAX learned from informed sources that the mission has not been given any extra powers.

UN-CSCE Mission Arrives in Abkhazia

LD2203174093 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1649 GMT 22 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Roman Zadunaiskiy]

[Text] Moscow March 22 TASS—A joint UN-CSCE mission arrived in Gudauta in Abkhazia on Sunday to acquaint itself with the situation in the Abkhazian-controlled city, TASS learned from the press centre of the Abkhazian parliament which added that the mission had earlier stayed in the Georgian-controlled Sukhumi.

The fact-finding mission told Abkhazian leadership it has no authority to solve other issues and that the problem of a peaceful settlement of the Georgian-Abkhazian conflict will be discussed by another UN mission which is to visit Abkhazia in the near future to submit its proposals on the matter.

The United Nations also plans to sent a separate delegation to Abkhazia which will probe human rights violations on the territories controlled by Abkhazians and Georgians. The agreement on the question was reached after the Abkhazian parliament had several times insistently appealed to the UN.

Currently, the United Nations is studying ways to implement its decision about humanitarian aid to Abkhazia and Georgia, the press centre said.

Numerous Parties, Organizations Suspended in Abkhazia

OW2203181993 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1736 GMT 22 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The activities of numerous parties, organizations, and publications have been suspended, effective since March 22, by the pro-Georgian authorities in Abkhazia for "obstructing the stabilization of the situation." Any marches, rallies, strikes, and other large-scale events are also banned.

The Abkhazian Justice Ministry has been told to halt the registration of political parties, movements, organizations, and mass media.

Press Chief Says Abkhaz Shot Chechens

AU2303082293 Tbilisi SAKARTVELOS RESPUBLIKA in Georgian 19 Mar 93 p 1

[IPRINDA report: "A Response From Groznyy To Events in Akbhazia"]

[Text] **In a conversation with a correspondent from the IPRINDA news agency, the head of CHECHEN-PRESS said that, according to the latest information, there is practically not a single Chechen fighting on the side of Abkhaz formations in the conflict zone in Abkhazia. "Furthermore," he said, "relations with Chechen fighters who had earlier fought side by side with the Abkhaz had recently become sharply exacerbated for various reasons. A few days ago, the Abkhaz treacherously shot in the back two Chechen fighters, which has evoked an extremely negative response among the population of Chechnya."**

"Taking into account the extremely tense relations today between Russia and Chechnya and also the aggressive actions of the Russian Armed Forces in Abkhazia," emphasized the head of CHECHEN-PRESS, "any Chechen who fights on the Abkhaz side will be viewed as a traitor to the interests of the Chechen people." He pointed out that, at the same time, it was appropriate to recall that in a recent conversation with Georgian journalists, Shamil Besayev, commander of the armed forces of the Confederation of Caucasian Peoples, had stated that "in the given instance, while there is a Georgian-Abkhaz conflict taking place and the Abkhaz people, who are small in number, are suffering, we will help the Abkhaz but if military actions begin between Russia and Georgia, Chechen volunteers will fight on the side of Georgia."

Kakheti Goes Without Electricity, Bread, Water, Gas

AU2303082893 Tbilisi SVOBODNAYA GRUZIYA in Russian 18 Mar 93 p 4

[IPRINDA news agency report under rubric "According to Reports From Correspondents and Information Agencies": "On the Situation in Kakheti"]

[Text] **In this [eastern] region of Georgia, there has been no electricity now for two weeks; no bread is being baked and there is no drinking water or natural gas.** The population is in a complete information vacuum. Workers at the children's polyclinic in the town of Telavi are collecting signatures for a protest statement. Medical workers point out in their letter that, if Georgia's leadership does not start to resolve the problems connected with the lack of electricity in Kakheti, they will go on strike as of 22 March.

Estonia

Republic Reacts to Yeltsin Actions, 'Turmoil' in Russia

Laar Concerned With 'Instability'

WS2303101493 Tallinn ETA NEWS RELEASE in English 1914 GMT 22 Mar 93

[Text] Tallinn, March 22—Estonia supports President Boris Yeltsin in the present political turmoil in Russia, Estonia's Prime Minister Mart Laar said.

"Estonia is interested in political stability in Russia," Laar told the Russian information agency RIA on Monday [22 March].

"We remember Yeltsin's support to the Baltic countries in 1991," Laar said while adding that, therefore, Russia has the right to rely on Estonia's moral support. "But we have no right to interfere in its affairs, the Russian citizens have to solve their problems themselves," Laar said.

Estonia is also concerned that political instability in Russia might undermine negotiations between the two countries and Estonia might even consider to break off the negotiations.

The results of the negotiations depend on who wins the battle for power in Russia, Minister Juri Luik, the head of Estonian delegation at Estonian-Russian negotiations, told ETA. Nevertheless, Russia's government has to observe its international obligations, including rapid withdrawal of its forces from Estonia.

"Hopefully, Russia understands that one of the reasons why Western aid to Russia has not been sufficient, is the country's policy towards the Baltic countries," Luik said.

"We are observing the situation in Russia very closely," Estonia's Foreign Minister, Trivimi Velliste, told ETA and added that Estonia was making preparations in case the situation in Russia might go out of control.

Foreign Relations Committee Comments

WS2303111793 Tallinn ETA NEWS BULLETIN in English 1746 GMT 22 Mar 93

[From 22 March PAEVALEHT p 1]

[Text] March 22, 1993—Commenting on the special powers of Yeltsin in Russia and the extreme situation, chairman of the Riigikogu foreign affairs commission Vello Saatpalu said he had expected Yeltsin to act like that. Everything published and spoken in Russian press lately indicated that Yeltsin could take such steps, Saatpalu said. "Starting from the extra congress of the Russian deputies, the Russian president probably gathered strength and ensured his rear. The democratic reforms started in Russia were and are in danger and according to lots of western leaders they are connected with Yeltsin only," Saatpalu said.

Parties Support Russian Democracy

OW2203203493 Moscow BALTFAX in English 2025 GMT 22 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The opposition parties of Estonia have expressed deep concern over Russian developments. A statement by five parties which was made public Monday [22 March] says that "attempts, undertaken by certain forces in Russia, at obstructing the political and economic reforms present a tangible threat to the independence of Estonia." The political uncertainty in Russia makes an adverse impact on the Russo-Estonian negotiations, the document emphasizes.

The Estonian opposition pins great hopes on the referendum called by the legitimate President of Russia.

"We hope that the peoples of Russia will choose democracy and economic prosperity rather than totalitarian rule and low living standards. We support those political forces that look for a balance and respect the rights of all peoples to self-determination and sovereignty," the statement says.

Russian Garrison Given No New Orders

WS2303101993 Tallinn BNS in English 0935 GMT 23 Mar 93

[Text] Tallinn, Mar 22, BNS—The head of the Russian garrison in Tallinn, Admiral Yuriy Belov, said the Russian military units have received no specific orders or new guidelines after this weekend's developments in Russia.

"What we saw on TV is all," Belov told BNS.

Russian President Boris Yeltsin in his Saturday's [20 March] televised address to the nation said he had ordered the defense ministry not to interfere with politics.

Defense Minister Pavel Grachev, while speaking before the Russian parliament Sunday, said the army will base its actions on the constitution and the Russian legislation. But he also admitted that the situation in the armed forces was becoming tense and didn't rule out that the army might split.

Belov today resolutely refused to comment on the mood of the Russian units in Estonia.

Situation 'Normal'; Russia Being Watched

OW2303113293 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1101 GMT 23 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The situation in Estonia remains normal, Estonian Interior Minister Lagle Parek told Baltfax, commenting on the impact of the Russian crisis on Estonia.

She also said that the security police are observing the Russian units, located in Estonia. "No real threat is coming from them, but we must be ready for anything," she said.

Lagle Parek also said that the criminal and security police were ready to take all the necessary measures if the situation in Russia begins to deteriorate and if it has a negative impact on Estonia. She refused to state which particular measures are going to be taken, saying that it was a state secret.

Government Chooses 'Better Evil'

OW2303112693 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1102 GMT 23 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] By supporting Boris Yeltsin, Estonia has chosen the better evil, writes the newspaper POSTIMEES, analyzing the Estonian authorities' approach to the crisis of authority in Russia.

Neither Yeltsin, nor the parliament backed the Baltic states after the August putsch of 1991, says this newspaper's editorial published on Tuesday [23 March]. Back in 1991, Russia's executive and legislative bodies sharply criticized the Baltic states, above all Latvia and Estonia, writes this newspaper.

It is clear therefore, why the Estonian Government responded to Boris Yeltsin's Saturday appeal only on Monday. They were waiting for further developments in Moscow and for the response from the West. On Sunday evening, they were still waiting for the nearest neighbors, first of all Finland, to state their attitude to the events. Only after the West gave Boris Yeltsin its full support for Yeltsin did the Estonian Foreign Ministry made its position clear, says the newspaper POSTIMEES.

Minister Says Negotiations Depend on Moscow Situation

OW2203204293 Moscow BALTFAX in English 2026 GMT 22 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] A breakthrough in Estonian-Russian negotiations is dependent only on the situation in Moscow, Minister Juri Luik told the State Assembly Monday [22 March]. He heads the Estonian delegation at the talks.

He doubted that, against a background of today's political situation in Russia the next round which is scheduled to be held in Nakhabino April 5, can be very successful. On the other hand, he said, "Estonian-Russian relations are not so good that we can give up the negotiations." A significant step forward could be made, the Minister thinks, if Boris Yeltsin's supporters overcome.

In response to a question on victims of illegal reprisals Luik said that the Russian negotiators admit the illegality of the Stalin era reprisals refuse compensating the victims or their families.

Nevertheless, Juri Luik emphasized, the Estonian side will press ahead for solution of this problem.

Laar Says Kozyrev Standpoint 'Not Acceptable'

WS1703140093 Tallinn ETA NEWS BULLETIN in English 1136 GMT 17 Mar 93

[From 17 March PAEVALEHT and RAHVA HAAL, p.1]

[Text] Wednesday, March 17—Premier Mart Laar told the news conference that the standpoints of Russia's Foreign Minister Kozyrev are not acceptable for Estonia. Kozyrev made a statement in Kaliningrad saying that the stay of Russian Navy in the Baltic Sea is one of the means of carrying out Russia's foreign policy. Kozyrev said that the Kaliningrad oblast is an important focal point for military-strategic and economic interests for Russia.

Giving a survey of his visit to Latvia, Laar noted that "it was the last moment to initialize practical cooperation between the two states." Laar and Godmanis made a principal agreement on concluding a two-side free trade agreement, the representatives of Latvian Government will arrive in Estonia next week (March 26) to discuss it. Tripartite meeting of the leaders of the Baltic states was not discussed, main stress was laid on cooperation tactics and forms.

Stressing the importance of information exchange between the two states, Laar found that Estonia and Latvia have similar difficulties with pullout of Russian troops as well as a common interest in developing trading. The Latvian Government was interested in our monetary reform, organisation of border control and stopping inflation. Latvians will soon establish a visa regime on the eastern border, therefore a delegation will be visiting Estonia to get introduced with the work of Estonian border guard.

According to the Road and Communications Minister Andi Meister, postal tariffs will rise from March 20. An international postal parcel will cost 14.50 to 214 kroons depending on the point of destination and weight, air parcel will cost 18.90 to 330 kroons and remittance tariffs will be one kroon per 10-kroon remittance.

Mart Laar Favors More Active Foreign Policy

OW2203145093 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1423 GMT 22 Mar 93

[From the "Diplomatic Panorama" feature;—following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Estonia should respond to the war of propaganda launched by Russia more effectively, said Prime Minister Mart Laar in an article published by the POSTIMEES newspaper on Monday.

"Greater attention should be paid to the situation of Finno-Ugrian peoples" living in Russia, he pointed out. This problem should be raised on international level, he said.

"The storm units of Russia's Army" must leave Estonia as early as this year, the premier said. This relates to the

military units stationed in Estonia's capital. His government finds it necessary to establish a strict border regime. The persons staying in Estonia illegally "should be deported," he pointed out.

Four 'Defense Districts' To Be Established

WS2203104793 Tallinn ETA NEWS BULLETIN in English 1921 GMT 19 Mar 93

[Text] Friday, March 19—Four defence districts are to be formed in Estonia, one of which will concern the defence of the islands, head of the defence forces GHQ Ants Laaneots announced. The districts will be divided into regions which coincide with counties. Tallinn will form a separate district. The division is based on the document on the basis of national defence, rejected by the Riigikogu yesterday. The defence forces have to use the existing defence conception for the lack of any alternative, Laaneots said.

Mart Laar Views Fate of Ammo Dumps in Tallinn

OW2103082893 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1718 GMT 19 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The fate of the ammunition depots of the Russian Army which are situated in the region of Astangu in the suburbs of Tallinn will probably be solved in the near few weeks, the Estonian Prime Minster Mart Laar declared at a press conference on March 19.

He reported that the session of the government held the day before passed a decision to force liquidation of the depots and to start appropriate negotiations with the command of the Tallinn garrison of the Russian Army.

"We have already reached an agreement with the Russian party to liquidate the depots. We should primarily ensure reliable safety and security measures and then to export the ammunitions. We should surely render assistance in liquidation of the depots," said Laar.

There are about 7000 tons of shells, mines and other ammunitions at the military depots in Astangu.

Vestiges of KGB Pose 'Threat' to Government

OW1903122493 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1150 GMT 19 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] By manipulating information, once collected by the KGB, and by using the services of former KGB agents, Russia may blackmail Estonian politicians, statesmen and businessmen, and make them work for Russia, the Estonian premier's adviser Tiit Pruuli writes in an article, published by the newspaper Postimees on Friday.

Using its own information on the one hand and criminal connections on the other, the KGB may evolve into an anti-Estonian force which will be practically impossible to crush, he said. The penetration of foreign agents into Estonia's economic agencies will be a threat to Estonia's sovereignty, he added.

"I'm convinced that the hostile forces would be glad to establish control over many of the strategic branches, above all power engineering and transportation," he wrote. They may also decide to establish their own banks and plant their agents into companies, involved in such a specific business as the installation of alarm systems. Moreover, to this day the former Soviet Union's intelligence centers are still operating in Estonia against Estonian citizens, he warned.

Although the vestiges of the KGB and other intelligence services are not the government's priority, they should not be neglected and dealt with without excessive fuss. A tactful rehabilitation process should become a major aspect of this process. Those who collaborated with the KGB for various reasons should be given a chance to inform the security police about this without fearing political reprisals, wrote Tiit Pruuli.

Government, Parties To Speed Property Reform

OW2003011293 Moscow BALTFAX in English 2020 GMT 19 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Estonian Government has decided that privatization will be in the sphere of competence of the executive branch alone. To make this proposition viable, a new office has to be set up which will engage the work force and combine the powers of the Estonian Privatization Enterprise and the State Property Department. This new body will carry out the privatization law which is now under consideration.

The reform of property rights was also discussed by a meeting of government officials and representatives of political parties that was held Friday. In summarizing the "round table" discussion Liia Hanni, reform minister, said that there had been no irreconcilable differences between the participants while various views on specific problems were quite natural.

She noted that issuing popular capital bonds will be a major step for the government which will imply that the government cedes some property rights.

Premier on Disadvantages of Lithuanian Economics

OW2103084793 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1718 GMT 19 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Estonian Prime Minister Mart Laar declared to journalists on Friday that economic policy pursued by the Lithuanian Government leaves no prospects for tripartite economic agreements between the Baltic states.

He believes that the ideology of the economic reforms in Latvia and Estonia coincides and it is necessary to strengthen economic cooperation between two countries. "If we fail to conclude tripartite agreements we shall address our closer neighbor," said Laar.

An Estonian-Latvian treaty on free trade and a treaty on mutual protection of investments, and other economic agreements are to be signed on March 26 in Tallinn.

Mart Laar also said that interests of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania in the sphere of foreign and defense policy have much in common and contacts in these fields should be more active.

Government Considers Bigger Role in Baltics

LD1803151293 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1014 GMT 18 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Albert Maloveryan]

[Text] Tallinn March 18 [dateline as received]—Estonian diplomacy has become mature and is regarded as an equal in the world, the Estonian Minister of Foreign Affairs Trivimi Velliste commented on the election of Estonia to chair the Council of Baltic States.

The foreign minister said in an interview on Estonian TV that the republic can now defend its reputation in the foreign policy arena more effectively and place urgent problems on the agenda. For example, the head of the Estonian foreign policy department referred to the problem of a foreign military presence in the republic and the guaranteeing of international control over the dismantling of nuclear reactors at the Russian naval base in Paldiski.

Estonia has been given responsibility for organizing the next forum of ministers of foreign affairs of Baltic countries, scheduled for the spring of 1994, Velliste said.

Protocol Dropped on Common Baltic Visa Space

OW2003004493 Moscow BALTFAX in English 2018 GMT 19 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Estonia has unilaterally dropped the protocol on a common Baltic visa space, the three countries signed a year ago. Prime Minister Mart Laar was brief: "The visa space is closed".

The Estonian Government's resolution adopted on Thursday [18 March] says that only the citizens of 40 countries will be allowed to enter Estonia if they have Latvian or Lithuanian visas. The citizens of other countries, including CIS member-states would have to apply for the Estonian visa in any case.

Estonia was the sole Baltic republic to have introduced a visa regime on the border a year ago. Latvia is going to follow suit shortly.

Prime Minister Mart Laar told journalists on Friday that the decision to "limit" the common visa space would come into effect in two weeks. Within that deadline the Estonian Foreign Ministry will notify Latvia and Estonia of the decision.

Latvia

Government Forms Group To Analyze Russian Situation

LD2203220993 Riga Radio Riga Network in Latvian 2000 GMT 22 Mar 93

[Text] The Latvian Government has formed a special operations group which will follow the processes taking place in the internal politics of Russia and which will analyze and predict their development. This was announced today at a regular session of the LTF [People's Front of Latvia] faction by Minister of Foreign Affairs Georgs Andrejevs.

After the session, the leader of the faction, Indulis Berzins, told journalists that there was information at the disposal of the government on some political forces in Russia which, especially with the approaching elections, might attempt to influence the situation in our state. Therefore, possible ways of not allowing the realization of such plans were discussed at the faction. We will see how our many security services operate, added Berzins significantly.

Berzins assessed the present situation in Russia as unpredictable, because it is not known what the action of the army high command, the individual regions of the country, and the political trends will be. We are interested in a stable and democratic Russia, Berzins said; however, it is difficult to hope for that at present.

Martins Virsis, first deputy minister of foreign affairs of Latvia, participated in the faction session.

Fears Russian Influence in Election

OW2203204093 Moscow BALTFAX in English 2025 GMT 22 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Today "Russian imperial forces may try to influence the Latvian election by supporting, notably financially, the pro-Russian organizations," Indulis Berzins, leader of the largest parliamentary party group and Foreign Relations Committee Chairman told journalists.

At a group meeting behind closed doors which was attended by Georg Andreyev, Foreign Minister, and Janis Dinevic, State Minister, the situation in Russia in the aftermath of President Yeltsin's address was discussed.

Berzins thinks that the election will be greatly influenced by the so-called sacks with the Latvian KGB (secret police) files which are stored in the Latvian parliament building.

"There is no saying if they are genuine. Who of the nominees was in the pay of the KGB is known only in Moscow," the Popular Front leader said.

He told Baltfax that "the extremists in Russia who want to restore the USSR have, for practical purposes, no chance to take power."

Lithuania Requests Extradition of Former OMON Commander

OW2003010393 Moscow BALTFAX in English 2019 GMT 19 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Janis Skrastins, Latvian prosecutor general, has received an application by Lithuanian authorities for extradition of Sergey Parfyonov, former deputy commander of the Riga OMON [Special Purpose Militia Detachment] special police force, for investigation, BALTFAX was told by Latvian prosecution officials.

Skrastins has not responded officially although he had promised to extradite Parfyonov at a meeting with his Lithuanian counterpart last week in Riga. The three former Soviet Baltic republics have signed a treaty on assistance in legal matters that provides for extradition of common criminals.

The Lithuanian investigation team wants to question Parfyonov on the murder of seven Lithuanian customs officials in Medininkai and other assaults on Lithuanian customs offices in January 1991.

World Bank Experts Meet With Godmanis

OW1903121893 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1150 GMT 19 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] A group of the World Bank's experts welcomed the policy of monetary stabilization and gradual introduction of the national currency unit, the lats, pursued by the Latvian government.

On March 18, at the end of a five-day visit to Latvia, the World Bank delegation met with Latvian Prime Minister Ivar Godmanis and gave him a report evaluating the economic reforms in Latvia. This report also contains recommendations on ways of implementing the government's structural policy.

The experts stated that the privatization of major enterprises proceeded too slowly, that this process should be accelerated and that independent agencies in charge of this job should be set up.

They also recommended that the Latvian authorities establish a network of commercial banks as the privatization of the Bank of Latvia's branches continues.

The government was also recommended to lift export tariffs and abstain from changing import tariffs too often.

Privatization of State Oil Enterprise Planned

LD2303041493 Riga Radio Riga Network in Latvian 2100 GMT 22 Mar 93

[Text] Economic Reforms Minister Aivars Kreituss reported on 22 March that in the near future it is envisaged to privatize the Latvijas Nafta state oil enterprise in order to eliminate the previous monopoly and also in order not to allow a shortage of fuel in Latvia.

According to Kreituss, it is envisaged that the state will keep approximately five oil depots in order to store state strategic reserves. The interests of local governments will also be taken into consideration in the privatization process by including their representatives on the privatization commission.

Lithuania

Reaction to Yeltsin Actions, 'Crisis'

Brazauskas Expresses Support

OW2303112793 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1103 GMT 23 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Lithuanian President Algirdas Brazauskas supported democratically-elected Russian President Boris Yeltsin and expressed hope that the crisis in Russia would be overcome. He also urged the parliament to make a statement in support of the policy pursued by the Russian president and government.

Addressing the parliament on Tuesday [23 March] morning, Brazauskas said that Lithuania wanted the schedule of the Russian troops' withdrawal, signed in September 1992, to be strictly implemented. He noted, however, that Lithuania was ready to sign a bilateral document with Russia on the withdrawal of the Russian troops.

Informing the deputies of his talks with Russian Ambassador Nikolay Obyertyshev, Algirdas Brazauskas said that they dealt with Lithuanian-Russian cooperation on juridical issues.

He also said that Lithuania's General-Prosecutor's Office had handed Russia the list of 20 people, who must be questioned as suspects or witnesses of the bloodshed in Vilnius in January 1991, and of the murder of Lithuanian policemen and customs officers in Medininkai. He expressed hope that the Russian parliament would accelerate the ratification of the agreement on cooperation between the Russian and Lithuanian judicial bodies. This, he said, would help investigate these crimes.

Seimas Chairmen Back Yeltsin

LD2203193493 Vilnius Radio Vilnius Network in Lithuanian 1100 GMT 22 Mar 93

[Report by correspondent Jolanta Paskeviciute on the "Pulse of the Planet" program]

[Excerpt] Who should react in Lithuania and how should we react to events in Russia? These questions were answered today by Ceslovas Jursenas, chairman of the Lithuanian Seimas, and Kazimieras Bobelis, chairman of the Seimas standing Foreign Affairs Committee.

We support Yeltsin's side. This was also done by the West. We should look toward the West, without forgetting our economic ties with Russia, said Kazimieras Bobelis.

Lithuanian President Brazauskas talked on the phone with Estonian President Lennart Meri and Anatolijs Gorbunovs, chairman of the Latvian Supreme Council. Therefore, a joint statement by the three leaders of the Baltic states can be expected soon.

Today, Lithuanian President Algirdas Brazauskas received Nikolay Obertyshev, Russian ambassador to Lithuania, at his request. Lithuanian Foreign Minister Povilas Gylys was also present at the meeting.

Minister Gylys answered the journalists' questions at the news conference that has just been concluded about what was discussed at the meeting of the president, ambassador, and minister. Here is Algirdas Usas with his report:

[Usas] Povilas Gylys informed the journalists that opinions were exchanged between Algirdas Brazauskas and Nikolay Obertyshev about the situation in Russia and Lithuania and also on the latest events in Russia. The tone of the meeting was proper and no demands were raised.

The future contacts with the Russian leadership were discussed; the meeting of the prime ministers was discussed in general terms; it is to take place; however, the situation in Moscow does not allow foreseeing it more exactly.

Minister of Foreign Affairs Povilas Gylys told the journalists that of late it was felt that attempts are being made to make the Russian position more firm. He told Nikolay Obertyshev today that this would cause only an appropriate reaction from our side. The journalists asked the foreign minister when the formation of the state negotiation delegation for the negotiations with Russian would be completed.

This must be done as soon as possible, the minister said. The composition was almost presented for confirmation; however, new people had been proposed and the presentation had to be postponed for a couple of days. [passage omitted]

Seimas Deputies View Situation

LD2203191293 Vilnius Radio Vilnius Network in Lithuanian 0700 GMT 22 Mar 93

[Interview with Romualdas Ozolas, member of the Lithuanian Seimas, member of the state negotiating delegation for talks with Russia, and chairman of the Lithuanian Seimas regional problems commission, and Algirdas Endriukaitis, member of the Lithuanian Seimas, by station correspondents Vytas Usas; date and place not given—recorded]

[Excerpts] [Usas] [passage omitted] Now let's go over to the next topic which will be widely discussed both here in this house and throughout Lithuania—the events in Russia. You are still a member of the state negotiation team for talks with Russia. What is your view concerning what is taking place there, and how could this affect the situation here, let us say, our relations with Russia?

[Ozolas] There is no doubt that a deadly close fight is taking place in Russia. What Yeltsin said on Saturday night is a danger signal. What was started by Khasublatov is a challenge, or to put it more precisely, further continuation of the provocation, because it is namely the Supreme Soviet and Khasbulatov personally which is generating all the reaction. There is no doubt that until the referendum, life in Russia will be very tense indeed. The fact that Yeltsin managed to state the essential matter—which is that land will be returned to the people—gives me hope.

We remember that in 1917 the land issue was openly raised and that this had the greatest influence on the self-determination by the peasants, which in its turn determined the possibility for the Bolsheviks to come to power. In this case the possibility to maintain democratic order should probably also be linked with the land, only it is not clear whether a Russian man, a peasant who has lived on a collective farm for so many years, has preserved the wish to own land. We can see that in Lithuania we have problems with the new attitude to farming the land. This is why Yeltsin's fight will be a fight to the death.

[Usas] In the case whereby events are unfavorable toward the Russian president, could this destabilizse the situation, say in Lithuania and other Baltic countries, and not only the Baltic states?

[Ozolas] Without doubt, because various claims to Lithuania and to the Baltic states were made long ago. Kozyrev's travels are nothing else but an attempt to (?link up) the Baltic states in advance with regard to possible influence. I think that the attempt to set up a post of commissioner is very dangerous. It must be said that it has not yet been confirmed. However, the very discussion of this institution is absolutely impermissable, bearing in mind that each of the Baltic states is regulating the issues of their citizenship within the framework of their state constitutions, and the people who are living on the territories of our states have the possibility to make their decision with regard to the issue of citizenship. Nobody prevents them from becoming citizens of Latvia, Estonia,

and Lithuania if they accept the order defined by the Constitution. If they do not, they have the right to leave the country—and not necessarily to go to Russia. They can emigrate to any other country. Here an attempt to pass judgment on the constitutions of other countries, whether these constitutions are high quality constitutions or not and while looking at them through the eyes of the leaders of a foreign country, is an interference into the affairs of other states. An attempt to set up new mechanisms of control through the international organizations is an attempt to subjugate the international organizations in its own zone of influence.

I understand that the West is very frightened by the nuclear threat, and I understand that militarism in Russia is very much alive. Therefore, the West can make many concessions [as heard]; however, we should not make any concessions because of that. We should state clearly that this is an absolutely unacceptable stance, and express our stance in a very categorical manner.

Then there is the hindering of the withdrawal of troops which is currently taking place, linking it once again with various conditions and circumstances. This is causing great concern indeed. If a team other than Yeltsin's come to power and the current policy pursued by the present government is changed, then without doubt the claims to Lithuania and other Baltic states will be made much more categorically and on a wider scope—I would say, with a final view toward the liquidation of our states' independence. Russia has always had claims to the Baltic region, the strategic interests of Russia have not changed, they remain the same. They will probably be reinforced even more, bearing in mind the plans of the future Europe. Therefore our reaction must be extremely precise, firm, and also diplomatic.

[Usas] Here I present another member of the Seimas, Algirdas Endriukaitis. I would like to carry on with the topic we have just been discussing. Do you think that the current events in Russia indicate that the position concerning the withdrawal of Russian troops at a time when this issue was raised on many occasions, including various international forums, was right? Do the current events taking place in Russia confirm this?

[Endrukaitis] What we have already achieved in the agreements with Russia on the troop withdrawal is a great and miraculous achievement and we must not depart from this. However, Boris Yeltsin's statement of 20 March causes us great concern, because the Russian Supreme Soviet was elected by the old Communist laws and is playing greatly with democratic norms and procedures. They want to mislead everybody, including the world. I would say that Khasbulatov behaved in a cynical way when he chaired the session. When there was some confusion during the voting and the deputies started showing doubts, he said : Come on, you voted during the August putsch so vote now, indicating that they are continuing the democratic traditions of Russia, that they are very progressive people, and that Yeltsin wants to become an autocratic dictator. Well, the pro-Communist and pro-bolshevik deputies voted in August, and they were forced by circumstances to do this. The main concern about the split in all the forces in Russia is namely because it is being played via the imperial card, because the wish to retain this large state may stimulate some people to act undemocratically indeed.

To me the most tender, most painful, and most important point in the statement made by Boris Yeltsin is where he says that the imperialist forces want to get involved in an armed conflict with all the near abroad [as heard]. There is no doubt that he has more information and knows these forces, and we—the near abroad—also know what they are, and to find a pretext and reasons with regard to what the Baltics should do will be no problem for the great state imperialistic-minded people, bearing in mind historic experience. [passage omitted]

Our Seimas members should view it as their duty and obligation to stress their support to President Boris Yeltsin, remembering how he helped Lithuania and the Baltics in January 1991 when he visited Estonia—I already do not mention the August putsch. [passage omitted]

Saudargas Supports Yeltsin

WS2303111593 Tallinn BNS in English 0929 GMT 23 Mar 93

[Text] Vilnius, Mar 22, BNS—it is important to support of Russian President Boris Yeltsin since he is currently an absolutely lawful leader of the Russian state, said MP [member of parliament] Algirdas Saudargas, former Lithuanian foreign minister.

"Russia's democratic policy, led by the President, should get our support as well," he added. This would not mean interference with Russia's internal affairs, he said, because Russia's lawful state authorities would be supported.

Saudargas also serves on the parliamentary Foreign Affairs Committee.

The Lithuanian government's position is defined clearly, he said. The reaction of the Lithuanian Foreign Affairs Ministry "is quite careful and does not say which of the confronting sides is supported." Saudargas noted that the situation in Russia will be discussed further at the Foreign Affairs Committee and future steps of the government will be formed.

Commenting on the possible reaction to actions of the Russian Supreme Council, which discussed the Russian President's decree even before it was announced and came into force, Saudargas said President Yeltsin's attitude was formulated and the contents of the decree were disclosed during his speech.

"A political dialog is logical and possible," he said. At the same time he doubted legal decisions, "when juridically valid documents are absent." Saudargas said the reaction of the Russian Supreme Council "is too sensitive and creates an impression it was prepared in advance."

Foreign Ministry Statement on Russian Troop Talks

WS2303072693 Vilnius ELTA NEWS BULLETIN in English 1431 GMT 22 Mar 93

[Statement issued by the Foreign Affairs Ministry of the Republic of Lithuania; date not given; from ELTA "NEWS BULLETIN" No. 210]

[Text] 22 March 1993—One of the most important directions of Lithuania's foreign policies—the maintenance of good relations with neighbouring states. The Russian Federation occupies a special place between Lithuania's neighbours. It is an important political and economical partner of our country.

The new Lithuanian power understands this well. It is sincerely interested in good, mutually useful relations with Russia. It is ready to remove obstacles found in the way of co-operation. It hopes for the same from the other side even under these never-ending complicated conditions of Russia.

However, recently tendencies have appeared, that Lithuania's correct, good-will view towards Russia, is trying to be interpreted by certain people in Moscow and Vilnius as the new Lithuanian power's weakness, an inclination to one-sided concessions.

On this occasion we are stating that our preparation to demonstrate good-will should not be understood as not having a clear position or fluctuation.

The strength of Lithuania's position—historical [words indistinct] Lithuania has not done any wrongs to its neighbours. History has supplied us with the possibility to rebuild our self-dependence and no one will force us to renounce it. That is why we will further strive that no foreign army remains in our state. We emphasize, that speaking on a wide scale the army's withdrawal from Lithuania is not a concession for Lithuania. It is a correction of a historical offense.

Up to 1993, the Republic of Lithuania has made many compromises. For example, it accepted the zero citizenship law version.

Lithuania is ready to renew negotiations with the Russian Federation. Understanding all the political situation and the complications of the question on negotiations, we hope that the negotiations will bring acceptable results for both sides, will use the good neighbourly relations for development between the two states.

[Signed] The Lithuanian Foreign Affairs Minister Povilas Gylys

Landsbergis on Troop Withdrawal

LD2203204493 Vilnius Radio Vilnius Network in Lithuanian 1900 GMT 22 Mar 93

[Text] A statement made by Vytautas Landsbergis, leader of the Lithuanian Seimas opposition, has been received, which reads:

Nikolay Obertyshev, Russian ambassador to Lithuania, speaking on Lithuanian Radio, said that Russia may not adhere to the Russian- Lithuanian agreements on the withdrawal of Russian troops by 31 August, in accord with the timetable confirmed by bilateral agreement. This could happen if Lithuania did not meet the conditions set by Russia, the Russian ambassador said.

Concerning this matter, Vytautas Landsbergis states that the necessity to withdraw Russian troops from Lithuania is unconditional and that a bilateral agreement for the implementation of the withdrawal timetable and two additional agreements did not foresee any conditions under for carrying out all this. On the contrary, the documents point out that the agreements come into force from the moment they are signed, and on 8 September 1992 these documents were signed by the authorized ministers of defense and national defense on behalf of the Russian Federation and the Republic of Lithuania in the presence of the heads of both states. The documents were registered at the United Nations, which noted with pleasure the existance of these agreements.

Therefore, questioning the validity of the above documents is inappropriate and politically motivated. This is a pressure demanding that Lithuania accept new conditions set by Russia, and even implies a threat that the Russian policy towards Lithuania could change. There should be no place for such actions in state relations, and ambassadors normally act to make political relations between the states as good as possible, unless Mr. Obertyshev has a different kind of assignment, Vytautas Landsbergis said.

President, Russian Ambassador Discuss Various Issues

OW2203190593 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1811 GMT 22 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] On Monday [22 March] the President of Lithuania Algirdas Brazauskas recieved in Vilnius ambassador of Russia Nikolay Obertyshev and had a conversation with him upon his request. It was joined by the Lithuanian Minister of Foreign Affairs Povilas Gylys.

The Minister informed journalists that a wide variety of issues had been discussed ranging from an exchange of opinions on the state of affairs in Russia and Lithuania, to the prospects of russo-lithuanian summits and other issues of bilateral concern.

The Minister brought up the recent series of statements by Russian politicians and the ambassador to Lithuania who attempted to entangle the invariability of Russia's policy in what concerns the withdrawal of troops from Lithuania with the results of russo- lithuanian negotiations, and Lithuania's readiness for a compromise. P. Gypys said Obertyshev had stressed during the conversation that "in general, Russia's approach to the withdrawal of troops from Lithuania remains intact."

A. Brazauskas spoke out for the urgency of the immediate renewal of russo-lithuanian talks, which have practically ceased since last September.

The necessity of a presidential summit was also discussed at the meeting.

Seimas Committee Issues Statement on Russian Policy

LD1903140593 Vilnius Radio Vilnius Network in Lithuanian 1100 GMT 19 Mar 93

[Text] The Foreign Affairs Committee of the Lithuanian Seimas is astonished at the Russian law on compensation to Russian servicemen who will take part in the—unknown to us but expected by Russia—armed conflicts on the territory of the Baltic states. Russia's intention to obtain an official UN mandate to maintain peace and stability in neighboring states, while Russia itself is lacking peace and stability, is especially alarming and refutable both in the United Nations and everywhere else.

The differentiation of foreign states into distant and close—which was proclaimed in the Russian policy—is completely unacceptable. Not geographical but political content is attached to this notion, together with the treatment of neighboring foreign countries as areas within Russia's special interests and claims.

Russia's rights—proclaimed in Russia's military doctrine—to force its way to the Baltic Sea and its wish to maintain powerful armed forces in the Baltic region are unacceptable and menacing. This can only be regarded as the basis of imperial policy, once again representing danger to peace in Europe, the statement by the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Lithuanian Seimas says.

Further on Russian Policy

OW1903130893 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1151 GMT 19 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The statement of the Foreign Affairs Committee of Lithuania's Seimas cites the following: "There exists a tendency to make Lithuania and other Baltic states, which legally have never been part of the USSR, equal to the present CIS countries." The document distributed on Friday [19 March] notes that the Committee "was surprised" by Russia's decree to issue compensations to the Russian servicemen participating "in unspecified yet envisaged by Russia armed clashes on the territories of the Baltic states." Having pointed out that "the statements of several senior officials disagree with the policy of partnership and good neighboring relations between Lithuania and Russia," envisaged by the bilateral treaty "On principles of inter-state relations" dated July 20, 1991, the Foreign Affairs Committee makes a conclusion that Russia's intentions to get a U.N. official mandate "to support peace and stability" in the neighboring countries arouse great concern and should be declined.

The Committee qualified the division of foreign countries into "the close and far" ones proclaimed by Russia's policy as "completely unacceptable". The document states that these understandings have acquired political but not geographical essence and, thus, the states of the former USSR are viewed as a zone "of Russia's special interests and claims." The parliamentary committee called the strive for the Baltic Sea and the wish to possess mighty armed forces in this region stipulated in the Russian military doctrine as "unacceptable and dangerous." "We view these moves as the prove [as received] of imperial policy posing threat to the peace in Europe," the statement says.

The Foreign Affairs Committee expressed the hope that Russia will present appropriate explanations to the international community with respect to the legal actions and statements mentioned in this document.

Agreement Reached on Russian Military Transportation Costs

OW2003003593 Moscow BALTFAX in English 2018 GMT 19 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Russia will pay 176 Swiss francs (approximately $140) for each railway car of military equipment transported across the republic.

The tariff will apply only to the transport of equipment from Germany to Russia. The set price is two times higher than the charge for the transport of cargo within the state. Setting the price in hard currency will allow the parties to avoid the effects of the ruble's devaluation and the gradual increase in tariffs which ruble payments would thus require.

Lithuanian and Russian representatives also agreed in Moscow this week on tariffs on the transport of equipment and on payment procedures. Georgiy Selevonets, director of economics for the state enterprise Lietuvos geleeinkeliai ("Lithuanian railways"), told BALTFAX that the parties agreed on all basic issues, with the exception of tariffs on the transport of hazardous cargo.

Lithuania plans to establish a triple price, but the Russian defense minister disagrees with this. Negotiations will continue on the tariffs.

The new tariffs and procedures for payments will be applied after an inter-governmental Lithuanian-Russian agreement on the transport of military cargo across the territory of Lithuania is signed.